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THE EDUCATION OF THE WILL

The Theory and Practise of Self-Culture

BY

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DEDICATION

To M. TH. RIBOT

Director of the *Revue Philosophique*

Professor of Experimental Psychology at the Collége de France

With sincere affection and respect,

—J. P.

CONTENTS

Page

Preface to the first edition vii
Preface to the second edition xiv
Preface to the twenty-seventh edition xxi

THEORETICAL SECTION

BOOK I—PRELIMINARIES

I. The Evils to be Overcome 3
II. The Aim to Pursue 23
III. Discouraging and False Theories Concerning the Education of the Will 30

BOOK II—THE PSYCHOLOGY OF THE WILL

I. A Study of the Rôle that Ideas Play in the Will 53
II. The Rôle of the Emotional States in the Will 70
III. The Kingdom of Intelligence 100

BOOK III—THE INTERNAL MEASURES

I. The Part of Meditative Reflection in the Education of the Will 141
II. What Meditation Means and How to Meditate 198
III. The Rôle of Action in the Education of the Will 208

Page

IV. Bodily Hygiene, Considered from the Point of View of the Student's Education of His Will 247

V. A General Glance 289

PRACTICAL SECTION

BOOK IV—PRIVATE MEDITATIONS

I. The Enemies to Combat: Sentimental Day-Dreams and Sensuality 295

II. Enemies to Combat: Companions, Acquaintances, etc. 344

III. Enemies to Combat: Sophisms of the Indolent 355

IV. Joys of Work . . . . . .

BOOK V—THE RESOURCES OF OUR ENVIRONMENT

I. Public Opinion, Professors, etc. 389

II. Influence of the "Departed Great" . . . 412

Conclusion . . . . . .

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

> "What is so admirable is that they recognize the need of a master and of instruction in all other affairs—and study them with some care. It is only the science of life which they do not study at all, and which they do not desire to comprehend."
>
> NICOLE—"Treatise on the Necessity of Not Trusting to Chance."

IN the seventeenth century and during a part of the eighteenth, religion held supreme sway over the mind: the problem of the education of the will could not present itself in all its generalities. The forces wielded by the Catholic Church, that incomparable mistress of character, were sufficient to regulate along its broader lines the life of the believer. But to-day this instruction has been eliminated by the majority of thinking men, and it has never been replaced. Newspapers, re-

views, and even novels, vie with one another in depreciating the present unimportant rôle played by the will.

This universal neglect of the will has attracted the attention of physicians. But these physicians of the mind are unfortunately permeated with the prevalent doctrines of psychology. In the matter of the will, they attribute a special importance to the intelligence. They argue that what we lack is a metaphysical theory substantiated from the outside. Their ignorance is quite excusable. It is a law recognized in political economy that cultivation always shifts from the ground which is the softest but most unproductive to that which is the most fertile but the hardest to till. The same rule applies in the field of psychological science.

Before approaching the essential phenomena, the explanation of which is difficult, a study has been made of the simplest appearances, the conduct of which is of little importance. It is difficult to realize how insignificant is the influence on the character of a simple idea. The will is a sentimental power,

and every idea, in order to influence it, has to be colored with passion.

If the mechanism of the will is studied at close quarters, it will be seen that metaphysical theories are of little importance, and that there is no inclination deliberately followed which is not capable, by the intelligent use of our psychological resources, of influencing our entire life. A miser sacrifices every physical satisfaction; he eats poor food, sleeps on a hard bed, lives without friends, without pleasures, all for the love of money. This being the case, why should not an idea less degraded have the power of shaping our destiny? The fact is, that one does not realize how varied are the means offered by psychology to give us the power of becoming what we would like to be.

Unfortunately, up to the present time very little attention has been given to the study of our resources from this point of view.

The spirits which have directed the train of European thought for the last thirty years have been divided by two theories, which are the pure and simple antitheses of the theory

of the education of the will. The first consists in treating character as an immovable block over which we have no control. This infantile theory will be dealt with later on. The second seems apparently in keeping with the education of the will. It is the theory of the free agent. Stuart Mill himself[1] goes so far as to say that this theory has given its supporters a keen perception of "personal culture." In spite of this assertion of a determinist, we do not hesitate in considering the theory of the free agent as dangerous to the mastery of self as is the preceding one, and as definitely discouraging. It has, in fact, led one to consider self-enfranchisement as something easy and natural when it is in reality a task of long duration, a task which requires much patience, and which demands a very precise knowledge of psychological resources.

Through its very simplicity, this theory has deterred many keen and subtle minds from the study of the states of the will. It has thus caused to psychology, and it may be said to humanity, an irreparable loss.

[1] "Logic," II, Book VI, Chap. II. Paris, F. Alcan.

This is why this book is dedicated to M. Ribot. It is dedicated less to our old professor, to whom we owe our taste for psychological research, than to the man of initiative, who was the first man in France to expel metaphysics from psychology. First in the field, he resolutely set aside the investigation of the nature of the phenomena of conscience, in order to study as a scholar the antecedents and the unconditional concomitants of the intellectual and volitional states. This method, it must be borne in mind, is in no way metaphysical. It does not exclude psychology from metaphysics, but simply metaphysics from psychology, which is a very different matter. It consists in treating psychology as a science. The aim of the scholar is not simply to acquire knowledge, but to turn his knowledge to account.

The fact that the undulatory theory of light is only an unverifiable hypothesis, is of little value to the physician so long as the hypothesis succeeds; and what does it matter to the psychologist if his hypothesis—for instance, the hypothesis of the absolute correlation of the nervous and psychologic states—

is unverifiable so long as it succeeds? To succeed, to be able to anticipate events, to turn them to our advantage, and in a phrase to shape our destiny—here is the rôle of the scholar, and hence that of the psychologist. This, at least, is the conception we have formed of our task.

We have had to investigate the causes of the weakness of the will. We thought that the remedy was to be found in the careful culture of affective states. "The means of forming and strengthening methods of self-enfranchisement, of annihilating or suppressing impressions antagonistic to self-mastery," might have been the subtitle of the book we are offering to the public. This road has been untraveled; we have given our share of contributive effort to an important task. Instead of treating the education of the will "*in abstracto*," we have taken as the essential subject "the education of the will such as is demanded by prolonged and persevering intellectual work." We are convinced that students and intellectual workers generally will find here much very useful information. I have heard many young peo-

ple complain of the absence of a method in arriving at self-mastery. I am offering them the results of nearly four years of study and meditation on the subject.

JULES PAYOT.

Chamouni, August 8, 1893.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

The encouraging reception given by the foreign and domestic press and an enthusiastic public, who exhausted a first edition in a few weeks, proves that the appearance of this book was timely, and that it fulfils the urgent need of an enlightened public.

We thank our numerous correspondents, and especially those students of law and medicine who have sent us such valuable documents in praise of the first chapter of Book V. Some of them take exception to our "pessimism." Never, they say, has youth talked so much about action. Alas! to talk is of little value when we must act. It seems that the majority of young people confound noise and agitation with creative action. Some, and those the best qualified to speak, think that the youth of the schools consists for the most part of dilettanti and weaklings. Now dilettanteism and weakness are two diseases of the will which it is necessary to try to

cure. The practical part of the education of the will has encountered hardly anything but unmixed praise. The same can not be said of Chapter III (Book I) and Chapter I (Book II). We expected to be opposed on these points, but many of the critics, we think, have passed to one side of the question.

We have never made the assertion that the imagination is devoid of all influence on the will. We have laid great stress, it is true, on the rôle played in our volitions by instinctive promptings and habits. But we maintain in one place that the superior will consists in submitting our tendencies to our ideas; and in another, that the imagination has directly and immediately no power over the "brute force of our lower natures." The power of the imagination over such adversaries is indirect; it must, under pain of failure, get help from other sources—that is to say, from the affective states.

It is a curious fact that, while we were prepared to see our theory of liberty challenged by the defenders of the free agent, it is rather the partizans of the theory of the innateness of character who have taken us

into account. Moreover, the theory of the free agent seems to be discarded more and more by teachers who find that they have to deal, not with abstraction but with living realities. On this subject, I have been told that M. Marion, who is a great authority in these matters, indicated with vehemence in his lecture course of 1884-85 the practical harm that has been done to us by the metaphysical hypothesis of the free agent in preventing us from studying the conditions of real liberty. M. Marion, in the preface to his thesis on moral solidity, opposes the formula of M. Fouillée that the idea of our freedom makes us free. In simply believing we are free, we never realize the extent of our freedom, and this view, therefore, is more true than useful. Nothing is more obvious than that we are not really free until we have learned to gain our liberty by a hard struggle.

As for the reproach that has been made that the author has not made enough of innate character, it seems to us that this rests on an imperfect conception of what character is.

A character is not a simple substance. It is a complicated result of tendencies and ideas. In short, to affirm the innateness of a character is to affirm many absurdities.

First of all, it is assuming that a resultant, a mass of heterogeneous elements, a method of grouping forces, can be innate, which is unintelligible. It is assuming, moreover, that one can obtain, at the state of perfect purity, an innate element that can be detached from the maze woven by the influences of environment and education, which is impossible. The impossibility imposes on us the greatest diffidence in fixing the rôle played by innateness.

Lastly, to affirm that the character is innate implies an assertion against which our intimate experience, the experience of teachers and of the whole of humanity, rebels—the assertion that the essential elements of character and tendencies are forever unchangeable. We prove that there is nothing in this theory (II., iii), and that one can modify, repress, or strengthen a sentiment. If the whole of humanity was not of this opinion, one would not give one's self the trouble

of bringing up children. Nature would take care of them herself by her immutable laws.

These theoretical views are sufficient to invalidate the doctrine of the innateness of character. One should read, to complete the conviction, the recent works on character,[1] and particularly the last part of the work by M. Paulhan. It will be seen that there exists for the most part plurality of types in the same individual; that evolution makes tendencies disappear, or produces new ones as time goes on, that the substitutions of character in the same individual are frequent. What does this prove, except that nothing is so rare as character!

The vast majority of children present the spectacle of an anarchy of tendencies. Has not education rightly as its aim the task of organizing the disorder and producing stability and uniformity? Often indeed, when one thinks the work completed, arrives the crisis of puberty, which, like a wind-storm, overthrows everything; anarchy recommences, and if the young man, henceforth

[1] Ribot, *Revue philos.*, November, 1892; Paulhan, "Les Caractères," 1 vol. 237 pages, 1894, F. Alcan; Perez, "Le caractère de l'enfant à l'homme," 1892, F. Alcan.

alone, does not take his share in the task of moral unification, if he does not forge his character, he will become one of those "marionettes" of which we speak.

Moreover, if character was innate, if every one found everything complete, and, as a gift with which to celebrate the joyous advent of his birth, each man found the unity of life, it ought to be possible to find characters around us. Where are they?

Is it the political world which furnishes us with them? Except for lofty exceptions which render the contrast painful, one rarely sees whole lives directed toward a superior goal; the dispersal of ideas and inclinations is great; agitation is common, and fruitful actions are rare. One finds too often the souls of children in the bodies of men.

Who could fail to have observed in literature, after the terrible hurricane of 1870, an almost complete unanimity among those who held the pen to consecrate their efforts to the glorification of the human animal? And what shows the justice of the opinion of Manzoni [1] is that heredity goes just as far

[1] Cf. page 208.

toward lessening as toward increasing the passions.

Instead of stimulating what is greatest and noblest in ourselves, almost all writers have appealed to our inferior instincts; they have considered all our instincts as confined to the spinal cord. Instead of a literature for thinkers, they have given us a literature for moral decadents.

But why continue? If character implies unity and stability, if it implies orientation toward higher ends, it can not be innate. This unity and this stability, which are repugnant to the natural anarchy we possess, must be mastered slowly. Those who can not, or will not, pretend to it, must at the same time renounce that which constitutes the greatness of the human personality, which is, liberty and the mastery of self.

JULES PAYOT.

Bar-le-Duc, January 12, 1894.

PREFACE TO THE TWENTY-SEVENTH EDITION

In thirteen and a half years the "Education of the Will" has reached its twenty-seventh edition, and it has been translated into most European tongues. Such a success proves how great a need the book has filled. The publication of the letters which the author has received constitutes a document of vital interest on the mental attitude of the young people of our time.

The age to which we belong is conducive to mental unrest. Neither in dogmas nor institutions can be found the peace of mind which comes from the certitude of complete repose. Even Catholicism itself, which at one time offered a secure sanctuary for the unsettled mind, is full of the most serious internal dissensions.

In politics, sociology and morals no principle remains undiscust. Secondary education, knowing nothing of the will, remains almost exclusively intellectual. From the moral point of view, it is an ineffectual compromise between precedent and innovation.

Young people start in life with a handicap: they have not been trained to patience long sustained, to disinterestedness, to methodical skepticism, all of which go to constitute the philosophical spirit.

Their tendency is toward intolerance, and this because the great doctrine of the relativeness of knowledge has not penetrated their practical rule of life. A discipline of liberty has not instilled in them the habit of looking for "the soul of truth," which gives birth to new ideas. They take sides too soon, and from that moment they are useless for the elaboration of superior syntheses, or, in other words, for the search after truth.

Every man should apply himself with all his soul to the truth. It is in this that freedom consists—in the infusion of one's personal attitude with the realities of life.

To be free means, therefore, that one realizes the laws which register the exterior and interior realities of life, and that one realizes one's self. If these two conditions are not fulfilled, the complete and harmonious development of the personality is impossible.

This double consciousness, moreover, can

only be acquired by action. In observing the effects of action on one's self, little by little the cloak of prejudice and suggestion which conceals our deeper tendencies is penetrated, and the fundamental ego is revealed. Emerson remarks that his duty is something which has to do with his own personality, and not with the opinions of others—a rule as hard to apply in the practical as in the intellectual life, but which can take the place of all distinction between greatness and littleness. We must therefore have a distinct consciousness of ourselves if we wish to fulfil our personal destiny completely. If we do not know ourselves, we become the sport of circumstances, of suggestions, and of erroneous beliefs which mar our development and give it a direction which does violence to our fundamental tendencies.

Realizing ourselves and taught by realities in the midst of which we move, in order to fulfil our destiny we only have to treat with the law of causation. It is thus with the commander of a vessel. It is the tendency of the waves to swallow him up; he obliges them to support him, in the same way that he com-

pels a contrary wind to take him to port. Not only does reflex action lay bare our fundamental tendencies, but it renders almost tangible the great moral law which dominates our social structure. The expansion of my personality and the proportionate value of my cooperation in the common task depend for a large part on the richness, intellectual and moral, of other men. My highest individual power coincides with the greatest degree of outside support and of justice.

But the slow exploration of our fundamental tendencies and the intelligent development of our will, subjected to the law of cause and effect, make repose necessary. We must resist the dilettante habits acquired by an early encyclopedic training; we must resist the terrifying mental dissipation of useless reading, and the trepidation of contemporary life. Tranquillity is required before a solution will form into crystals of regular beauty. In the same way, we need meditation if we would mold our fundamental personality into good, energetic habits.

JULES PAYOT.

Chamouni, April 10, 1907.

THEORETICAL SECTION

BOOK I

PRELIMINARIES

I

THE EVILS TO BE OVERCOME

The Various Forms Under Which a Weak Will Makes Itself Manifest in the Student and in the Intellectual Worker.

Caligula wished that all the Romans might have had only one head, so that he could decapitate them with a single stroke. It is unnecessary for us to entertain a similar wish concerning the enemies we have to combat, for there is only one cause of almost all our failures and of nearly all our misfortunes. This is the weakness of our will, which shows itself in our distaste for effort, especially for persistent effort. Our passiveness, thoughtlessness and dissipation of energy are only so many names to designate the depths of universal laziness, which is to human nature as gravity is to matter.

The only real antagonist that can effect the persevering will must be found in a continued force. The passions are by nature transitory; the more violent they are, the

shorter their duration, except in those rather rare cases where they attain a fixity and a force bordering on insanity, therefore their intermittent character does not permit us to consider them as true obstacles to continuity of effort. There is time enough between the intervals of their attacks for a great amount of work. The real obstacle lies in a fundamental ever-present state of the mind which may be called effeminacy, apathy, idleness, or laziness. To arouse one's self constantly to fresh efforts and to renew daily the struggle against this natural state of mind is the only way in which we may dare hope for victory.

We call this state of mind fundamental, but we may as well call it natural. Indeed, any continued effort is not kept up long by man, except under pressure of necessity. Travelers are unanimous in their statements that, among uncivilized races, there is an absolute incapacity for all persevering effort. M. Ribot thoughtfully remarks that the first efforts of voluntary attention were probably effected by women who were constrained by fears of blows to regular labor while their masters rested or slept. Have we not, with

our own eyes, seen the redskins disappearing, preferring to be exterminated rather than attempt any regular labor which would give them a greater degree of comfort in life?

Without going so far for familiar examples, we may observe how slowly a child settles down to regular work. How few are the farmers and laborers who try to do better work than that which was done before their day, or that which is being done by their fellows. You may, with Spencer, make a mental review of all the objects which you use during the day, and you will find that there is not one which could not be better adapted to the use which is made of it by some slight effort of intelligence, and you will conclude with the author "that it really seems as if the aim of the great majority was to get through life with the least possible outlay of thought."

If we go back to our student days, how many workers could we cite among our classmates? Did not almost all put forth only the minimum effort necessary to pass their examinations? And since those college days how difficult all personal effort and all con-

centrated reflection has seemed! In all countries students can stand well in examinations, by the simple efforts of their memory. Their ideals, alas! are not very high. What they desire, as M. Maneuvrier has very astutely remarked, concerning his own country, France, are "official positions which are badly salaried and of little account, without any future or horizon, where the person ages as an employee and daily participates in the nothingness of an almost sterile occupation, to the decay and gradual numbing of his faculties, but, in which he rejoices unspeakably, in not being obliged to think or decide or act. A tutelary regulation impresses on his activity the regular movements of a clock, and excuses him from the fatiguing privilege of acting and living."

But one really ought not to put all the blame upon those in official positions. No profession, no career, however elevating it may be, is able of itself to safeguard one's personality, or vigor, or energy. During the earlier years of life the mind is capable of very active exercises, but soon the number of new combinations, the number and the pos-

sibility of the cases which make effort, reflection and research necessary diminish. The accomplishment of the highest functions which apparently demand powerful mental efforts, becomes purely a matter of habit. The lawyer, magistrate, physician, and professor, all live on an acquired fund of knowledge which very rarely increases and then only very slowly. The desire for effort diminishes from year to year, and from year to year fewer occasions arise which would bring these superior faculties of the mind into play. Ruts are thus formed in the mind, the intellect becomes deadened for lack of exercise, and with it the attention, the reflective faculties and the power of reasoning. If one does not cultivate some intellectual pursuits, one can not avoid the gradual torpor which will steal over one's energy.

Now as our book is addrest chiefly to students and intellectual workers, it is necessary to examine very closely the forms which the "evil to combat" takes among them.

The gravest form of evil among students is that atony, that "languor of the mind," which manifests itself in all the actions of

the young man. He sleeps several hours too long and gets up feeling stupid, dull and lazy. He slowly and yawningly makes his toilet, losing thereby considerable time. He does not feel very "fit," he has no inclination for work. He finds this a sad cold world. His laziness is apparent on his very face, his languor is written on every line of it, his manner is vague, dull and preoccupied; there is neither vigor nor precision in his movements. After this lost time he lingers over his breakfast, reading the newspaper through even to the advertisements, because that occupies him without requiring any effort on his part. In the afternoon, however, some of his energy comes back, but this is soon wasted in gossiping, in useless discussions, and, what is worse (as all idlers are envious), in slander. Politicians, literary men and professors all come in for their share of his criticism. In the late evening this unfortunate youth retires a little more irritable than he was the night before. For this atony or sloth, with which he approaches his work, is with him most of the time in his pleasures. No joy is attained without some difficulty in this world. All

happiness presupposes some effort. To read a book, to visit a museum, to take a walk in the park, are pleasures demanding initiative. They are active pleasures. But active pleasures are the only ones which count, the only ones which can be indefinitely renewed at one's pleasure. Lazy people inflict upon themselves the emptiest lives imaginable. They allow pleasures to slip through their fingers, because it is too much trouble to close their hand. St. Jerome facetiously compares them to wooden soldiers who always have their swords raised, without ever striking a blow.

Fundamental laziness in no way hinders periodic instances of energy. Uncivilized people are by no means averse to occasional outbursts of energy. What is so distasteful to them is that regulated persistent labor which in the end amounts to a very superior degree of energy. Any regular expenditure of energy, even tho it be slight, accomplishes more than great efforts separated by long rests. Idlers can readily endure war, which demands momentary violent efforts, followed by long periods of inactivity. The Arabs

conquered a vast empire, but they did not hold it, because they were not able to keep up the continued effort of organizing and administrating the country, such as making roads, and founding schools and industries. Even lazy students, when whipt up by the approach of an examination, are able to buckle down to slight but steady exertion, which has to be kept up, every day for months and years. It is so true that moderate, but continued, effort alone expresses real and fruitful energy, that we may consider all work deviating from this type as lazy work. It goes without saying that continued work implies continuity of direction. Therefore the energy of the will expresses itself less by multiple efforts than by the direction of all the forces of the mind down to hard work, but what they hate is that toward one definite end.

Here is a type of laziness that is very frequent. A young man is lively, gay and energetic; he is rarely idle. During the day he reads some treatise on geology, an article by Brunetière on Racine; he glances through several journals; rereads some notes; makes a rough sketch of a theme, and translates a

few pages of a foreign language. He has not been indolent for a single moment. His comrades admire his working power and the variety of his occupations. Yet we must brand this young man as a lazy student. To the psychologist, this great variety of work simply indicates a certain *spontaneous* attention, rich in its ability, but which has not as yet become *voluntary* attention. This apparent power for varied work means nothing more than a great weakness of the will. Our student furnishes us a very common type of laziness which we may call the *disseminated* type. Such "mental excursions"[1] are truly delightful, but they are only pleasure strolls. Nicolle describes those workers who flit here and there to no purpose as having "buzzing minds." They are, to recall Fénelon's simile, "like a lighted candle set in a windy place."

The great disadvantage in scattering one's efforts is due to the fact, that no impression has time enough to become permanent. We may lay it down as an absolute law controlling all intellectual work, that if we treat all the ideas and feelings which come into our

[1] Leibnitz, "Théodicée," Section 56.

minds, as if they were transient guests in a hotel, they will never be more than strangers to us, and will soon be forgotten. We shall see, in the following chapter, that true intellectual work requires that all our efforts should be put forth in a single direction.

This distaste for real effort, that is to say, for the coordination of all efforts toward a certain definite aim, is complicated by an equally strong aversion for personal effort. Indeed, it is one thing to bring forth a creative work or an invention, and another to store in one's memory that which others have done. Moreover, if personal effort is difficult it is because it necessarily implies coordination. The two supreme forms of intellectual labor are inseparably united in the work of creation. It is therefore easy to understand how distasteful such work must be to the great majority of pupils, who may, nevertheless, to-morrow be made class presidents.

Students of philosophy, for example, are good pupils so long as they are stimulated by the final examinations. They work hard and are generally accurate in their work. Unfortunately, however, they do not reflect at

all. Their laziness of spirit is shown by their proclivity to think with words, but nothing more. Thus, in studying psychology it never enters their heads that they have been making practical psychology from the day of their birth to the present time, just as M. Jourdain found that he had been "speaking prose without knowing it." It would be infinitely more simple to examine themselves and to discover personal examples instead of committing to memory those cited in their books. But no, they have an invincible tendency to memorize rather than to seek for themselves. The enormous amount which they are thus obliged to stuff into their memories frightens them less than the slightest personal effort. They are nothing, if not passive. Of course one must make some exceptions, tho they are few, of the best among the good students.

The experimental test for this incapacity of effort is furnished in France by the three monthly examinations for first place. The majority of students dread this exercise. To write a theme on a subject where one is not required to make any original investigations,

but merely to rearrange the material furnished by the lecturer according to a new plan; to set forth one's exposition with that neatness and orderly precision which the examiner requires, is, to say the least, a thoroughly unpleasant task.

Naturally, this fairly wide-spread aversion to personal effort accompanies the student to the university, without, however, any disparagement to him, as no examination takes the candidate's personal worth into consideration. It registers only the status of his memory, and the level, or rather the low-water mark, reached by the things he knows. Any conscientious student who reflects at all must acknowledge to himself how small a sum of effort is put forth during the year in any direction, except that of memorizing facts of medicine, law, natural science, or history.

It is also curious to note the subtle forms under which laziness manifests itself in learned men. Laziness, it must be understood, may often accompany great labor and prodigious undertakings, for quantity does not by any means make up for lack of quality. Furthermore, the quantity of work is often

prejudicial to its quality. For example, scholars freely scoff at philosophers, yet it is for them that, like "Ratto" the cat of the fable, they pull the chestnuts out of the fire. "Ratto" is the symbol of erudite work:

. . . "And thrust out his paw in a delicate way.
First giving the ashes a scratch,
He opened the coveted batch;
Then lightly and quickly impinging
He drew out, in spite of the singeing,
One after another, the chestnuts at last,
While Bertrand continued to devour them as fast."[1] . . .

Such work is the kind which one can take up and put down at pleasure. By constantly having texts to refer to, the mind does not need to do any creative work; it can study profitably even when it has lost its fine powers of penetration. Time will, perhaps, confirm the prophecies of Renan concerning the purely erudite sciences. These have no future, their results are uncertain and always open to controversy; and, what is more, the twenty thousand works which are yearly piled up in the National Library of Paris, without counting the journals and periodicals, will in

[1] From La Fontaine's Fable, translated by Elizur Wright, Jr.

fifty years add a million volumes to the present collection. A million volumes! Allowing half an inch for the average thickness of a volume, it would make a pile four times the height of Mont Blanc! Will history, little by little, get rid of its proper names and devote itself to great social movements whose causes and effects are always hypothetic, and will pure erudition, smothered under the mass of its own material, lose its power over the thinking mind? Less and less will mere accumulation be considered work. The time will come when such tasks will be called by their real name, tasks. The word work will be reserved for the putting forth of real energy, the elimination of trifling details, and for that concentration which produces supreme effort of thought. To create in reality means to conceive an idea in its essential entirety and to bring it forth to the light of day. To magnify trifling details only obscures the truth, and to the practised eye such a tendency indicates in some way that certain traces of that inherent laziness which is in all of us are mingled even with our bursts of intellectual energy.

It must be admitted, alas! that the system of instruction, in France at least, tends to aggravate this fundamental intellectual laziness. The schedule of study in the undergraduate courses seems devised to turn every student into a "scatter-brain." It obliges these unfortunate youths to skim over everything, and, by reason of the variety of subjects to be absorbed, it prevents them from following any idea to its source. How is a young man to find out that such a system of preparatory education is absurd? Yet it tends to kill his initiative and to destroy all disposition to be loyal in his work. A few years ago the power of the French artillery was mediocre, to-day it is ten times stronger. Why? Because the shell used to explode when it struck the obstacle and would go off without doing any great damage, but now, by the invention of a special detonator, the shell, after it has struck continues to move for a few seconds, penetrating into the very heart of the place of attack, and there, in close contact with every part, it explodes, grinding and pulverizing everything to pieces. In our practical education we have forgotten to add a detonator to

the mind. Our acquired knowledge is not allowed to penetrate profoundly. We would like to stop a moment, but we are urged to continue. We did not quite grasp the point; the professor's idea is not clear to us. But like another wandering Jew, we are compelled to keep on the move. We have yet to go through mathematics, physics, chemistry, zoology, botany, geology, the history of every nation, the geography of five continents, two living languages, several literatures, psychology, logic, moral philosophy, metaphysics, and the history of philosophical systems. On, on, we press on toward mediocrity and issue from our Alma Mater with the habit of studying superficially and judging everything by appearances.

This rapid pace is hardly lessened even in the university, and, for many students, becomes even more rapid.

In addition, it must be remembered that the conditions of modern life tend to reduce our spiritual life to nothing, and bring about mental distractions to a degree that can hardly be surpassed. Ease of communication, frequency of journeys, the habit of going to

the mountains, or the sea, all dissipate our thoughts. There is not even time to read. One lives a life that is full of excitement and yet, at the same time, empty. The daily papers, the artificial excitement they give to the mind, the ease with which their items of news lead the interest through various happenings in five continents make the reading of books seem dull to many people.

How shall we resist this dissipation of mental energy which leads to mediocrity, when there has been nothing in our education to prepare us for such resistance? Is it not discouraging to think that the most important thing, the education of the will, is nowhere directly and consciously taught? All that is done in this direction is done incidentally, with a view to something else. We pay no attention to anything but to the stocking up of our minds, and the will is cultivated only so far as it may be useful in intellectual work. Cultivated, did I say? I mean stimulated,—that is all. No student looks beyond the present. To-day he is working under a system of repression and stimulation; on the one hand, the professor censures; there are

jibes and jokes from one's companions, and penalties for poor work; on the other, rewards and praise. The morrow holds nothing but a vague far-away glimpse of an approaching examination for the bar, or for a medical degree, which, even the laziest students, somehow manage to pass. The education of the will gets little attention, and yet, is it not through his energy alone that a man is able to round out his life? Are not his most brilliant gifts barren without inward strength? Is not the energy of the will the most powerful factor in every great or noble thing that men accomplish?

Strange to say, everybody says just what we are saying here. Everybody feels the disproportion between the excessive culture of the mind and weakness of the will. But no book has yet appeared telling just how the education of the will should be conducted. A man hardly knows how to start by himself upon this work which his professors have not even outlined for him. Ask any ten students, taken at random from among those who are doing but little work, and their confessions will practically amount

to this. When we were at school the professor laid out the work which we were to do each day, even each hour. Our lessons were clearly and definitely assigned. We had to study such a chapter of history, such a theorem in geometry, to write such an exercise and translate such a passage. Furthermore, we were helped and encouraged, or perhaps reprimanded. Our ambition was easily aroused and kept up. Now everything is different. We have no definite set tasks. We spend our time according to our tastes. As we have never been taught to take any initiative in planning our work, which, moreover, was always made easy and adapted to our weaknesses, we are exactly like men who are thrown into deep water after having been taught to swim with a swimming-belt. We shall certainly sink, there is no question about that. We neither know how to work, nor how to make ourselves work. We do not know where to go to learn the method by which we can undertake by ourselves the education of our will, there is no practical book on this subject. So we have become resigned and we try not to think of "flunking" in our exam-

inations. It is too depressing. But then there are the societies and clubs and plenty of jolly good fellows to keep our spirits up. Time will pass just the same.

It is this book which so many young people complain of not having that we have tried to write.

II

THE AIM TO PURSUE

Altho the college curriculum ignores the will, we feel that we value ourselves only in proportion to our energy, and that we never can rely upon a man who is weak. Nevertheless, on the other hand, knowing that our efforts show the approximate measure of the strength of our will, we hardly care to be judged by that standard. We exaggerate the amount of work which we do. It is very easy for a student to say that he rises at four o'clock in the morning, knowing that no one is likely to do him the injustice of coming to investigate his statements. But when you happen in upon this heroic worker at eight o'clock and find him still in bed, you will note that every one of your rare visits will coincide with some unusual occurrence, such as an evening at the theater, or a dance, which explains the fact of his not being at work at four in the morning. Meanwhile, you will have noticed that this prodigious worker has failed in his examinations.

There is no other subject among students about which so many fibs are told. What is more, there is no young man who does not deceive himself, and who does not entertain delightful illusions concerning his own work and his capacity for putting forth great efforts. But what are these very ties if not a homage paid to the great truth that a person's worth depends on his energy?

Any doubts entertained by others concerning our will power wound us cruelly. To question our power to work, is as bad as accusing us of weakness and cowardice. Are we not relegated to a hopeless mediocrity if we are considered incapable of that power of persevering effort, without which one can not hope to rise above the intellectual poverty of the majority of men who encumber the so-called liberal professions.

This indirect homage paid to work proves the existence of a desire for energy among students. The only object of this book is to examine the methods, by the use of which a young man of vacillating inclinations may strengthen himself in the desire to work until it is transformed, first into firm, ardent and

lasting resolutions, and finally into invincible habits.

By intellectual work we understand either the study of nature and the works of other men, or personal productions. The work of production first presupposes study and includes all kinds of intellectual effort. For the first kind of work, the instrument of labor is attention properly so called; for the second, meditation or concentration. In both cases it is simply a question of attention. Work means attention. Unfortunately attention is not a stable, fixt, and lasting condition. It can not be compared to a bow in constant tension, but consists rather in a repeated number of efforts in which the tension is more or less intense, and which follow one another with greater or less rapidity. In energetic and disciplined attention, efforts succeed each other so closely as to give the effect of continuity, and this apparent continuity may last a few hours each day. Hence the object of our endeavor is to be able to put forth some effort of intense and persevering attention.

Unquestionably one of the best ways in which we may cultivate self-control is cour-

ageously to set for ourselves some daily task that is difficult. Youth, in its exuberance, is constantly inclined to give predominance to the animal life over that which appears to be the dull unnatural life of the majority of intellectual workers.

But strenuous and persevering efforts are not in themselves sufficient; they may be of the undisciplined and wandering type. They must, therefore, first of all be directed toward the same end. There are certain conditions of intimacy, continuance and repetition which are necessary if an idea, or feeling, is to gain a foothold in our minds and remain with us.

These ideas and feelings must gradually extend their sphere of influence, and widen their circle of relationships, and thus little by little make their own personal value felt. This is how works of art are created. Some thought, often a living thought of youth, lies obscurely hidden within a man of genius. Something that he reads, some incident in life, a happy expression uttered carelessly by some author interested in other things, or not familiar with that kind of thinking, but who perceives the idea without understanding

its fecundity, any one of these gives to the brooding idea a consciousness of its value and of its possible rôle. Henceforth, this idea will draw nourishment from everything. Travel, conversation, varied reading will supply the assimilable elements, on which it will glut and grow strong. Thus Goethe carried the conception of Faust in his mind for thirty years. It took all that time to germinate and grow and push its roots deeper and deeper, and to draw from experience the nourishing elements on which this masterpiece was developed.

This ought to be the case, to a certain extent, with all important ideas. If the idea only passes through us, it will be null and void. It is necessary to give it repeated, frequent, and careful attention. Care should be taken, not to abandon it before it can live independently, or before it has formed an organized center of its own. It should for a long time be kept in mind and often referred to. In this way it will acquire a vitality strong enough to attract fertile thoughts and feelings, which it will make a part of itself by that mysterious magnetic power called

association of ideas. This work of the organization of the idea, or sentiment, is slowly accomplished by calm and patient meditation. Such developments may be compared to the wonderful crystals formed in the laboratory, which require the slow and regular deposit of thousands of molecules in the midst of an absolutely still fluid. It is in this sense that all discoveries are the product of the will. It was "by constant thinking about it" that Newton verified his discovery of universal gravitation. If there is still any doubt that genius is nothing but "eternal patience," let us listen to Darwin's confession: "For my meditation and reading I select only those subjects which make me think directly of what I have seen, or of what I shall probably see. I am sure that it was this discipline which made me capable of doing what I have done in science." His son adds: "My father had the ability to keep a subject in mind for a great number of years without ever losing sight of it."[1]

But what is the use of insisting upon such a self-evident truth? We may as well sum up

[1] Life and Correspondence of Charles Darwin.

our points. The object to be sought by the intellectual worker is the energy of voluntary attention, an energy which expresses itself not only in the vigor and frequency of effort, but also, and above all, in the perfect direction of all our thoughts toward one single end, and by a subordination, for the time being, of our volition, feelings, and ideas to the directing, dominating idea for which we are striving. Human laziness will always be tempting us away from this ideal, but we must strive to realize it as completely as possible.

Before considering the means of transforming a weak, vacillating desire into a lasting volition, it is important to get rid of two philosophical theories, which, tho in opposition to each other, are equally disastrous to the achievement of such self-mastery.

III

DISCOURAGING AND FALSE THEORIES CONCERNING THE EDUCATION OF THE WILL

A POLEMIC should be nothing more than a piece of preparatory work which the writer should execute carefully, but which he should keep to himself. Nothing is more powerless than pure negation. Constructive argument is the only thing of value, criticism is useless.

Therefore, because our book is a work of instruction, and because it sets forth a sound doctrine that is firmly established on definite psychological data, we shall here attack two wide-spread theories which are as deplorable in their practical results as they are false in their speculations.

The theory which considers character as unchangeable is false in itself and regrettable in practise. This hypothesis, set forth by Kant and repeated by Schopenhauer, is supported by Spencer.

According to Kant, we have chosen our character in the noumenal world and our

choice is irrevocable. Once "descended" into the world of space and time our characters, and consequently our wills, must remain as they are, without our being able in the slightest degree to modify them.

Schopenhauer also declares that different characteristics are innate and immutable. It is impossible, for example, to change the nature of the motives which affect the will of an egotist. You may by means of education deceive him or, better still, correct his ideas and lead him to understand that the surest way to attain prosperity is by work and honesty, and not by knavery. But as to rendering his soul sensible to the suffering of others, that idea must be renounced. That would be more difficult than turning lead into gold. "We may convince an egotist that, giving up a small profit, he may gain a much larger one; or we may convince a wicked man that, by causing pain to others, he may inflict worse pain upon himself. But as for convincing them of the wrong of such selfishness and depravity in themselves, you can no more do it than you can prove to a cat that it is wrong to like mice."

Herbert Spencer takes quite a different view. He agrees with the English school that, under certain external forces, the human character can after a time be transformed along general lines by the force of external circumstances and varying conditions in life. But such work requires centuries. This theory is discouraging in practise, because I, as a student, can not calculate on living ten centuries. I can at most rely on only twenty years of plasticity. Even if I wanted to set to work on my own moral amelioration I could not do it. I could not struggle against the character and heritage which were bequeathed to me by my ancestors, and which represent thousands, and perhaps millions, of years of experience organically recorded in my brain. What could I do against a formidable combination of ancestors; as soon as I try to rid myself of a part of the inheritance transmitted to me, they array themselves against my feeble personal will. It would be unreasonable even to attempt insurrection. Defeat from the start would be certain. I may, however, console myself by dreaming that, in fifty thousand years, my descendants, by

the continued influence of social environment upon heredity, will resemble so many perfected machines, wound up through the ages, and will grind out devotion, initiative spirit, etc.

Altho the question of character, seen from this point of view, lies outside the limit of our subject, we must nevertheless examine it in its general aspects, in order to find out our adversaries' strongest position.

The theories which we have just stated seem to us to show a remarkable example of that mental laziness, which, like original sin, is ineffaceable from the greatest intellects; a mental inactivity which makes them submit passively to the suggestion of language. We are all accustomed to think with words, but they often conceal from us the reality of which they are only the symbols. Because the word itself is an entity, we are strongly inclined to believe in the real unity of the things it stands for. It is to this suggestion, provoked by the word character, that we owe the lazy theory of the immutability of character. But who, for that matter, does not see that character is only a resultant? But a

resultant of forces is always subject to modification. Our character has a unity analogous to that of Europe. The chance of alliances, or the prosperity or decadence of one state, constantly modifies the resultant. The same is true of our passions, sentiments and ideas which are perpetually growing, and which, by the alliances which they contract or break, can change the intensity, and even the direction, of the resultant. Our treatise will, furthermore, demonstrate the possibility of the transformation of character.

If we examine the arguments in favor of the theory, we find in Kant only *a priori* views, and these *a priori* views, which he thought necessary for the foundation of the possibility of liberty, would have been cut out of the system like a decayed branch, had not Kant, as we shall see, confounded fatalism with determinism.

In Schopenhauer we find more citations of moral failures than arguments. He is very fond of showing his erudition by piling up authorities. The smallest evidence of fact will always outweigh authority. Here are the sole arguments we can find in his works:

(1) If character were able to be improved, "one ought to find much more virtue among the older members of humanity than in the younger," which is not the case. (2) He who has once shown himself to be wicked has forever lost our confidence, which proves that we all believe character to be unchangeable.

Of what value are such arguments to any one who reflects? Are they arguments at all? What is there in these assertions, however exact as a whole, that proves that no one can modify his character? They only prove (and that does not apply to every one) that the great majority has never really and seriously undertaken any reform of character. They state that one's natural propensities take care of most matters of life, without the intervention of the will. The majority of mankind is governed by external influences. They follow custom and public opinion, no more thinking of resisting than we would dream of refusing to follow the earth in its movements around the sun. Is it we who raise the question of this almost universal idleness? The majority of men spend their lives in getting the means of subsistence. Day-laborers, the

poor, the worldly minded, and women and children scarcely reflect at all. They are "marionettes," somewhat complicated and conscious, but whose movements are all governed by impulses springing from involuntary desires and external suggestions. Rising from the animal level by slow evolution, under pressure of the stern necessity of the struggle for existence, the majority show a tendency toward retrogression as soon as external circumstances cease to stimulate them. Those who possess no ardent thirst for the ideal, nor a certain nobility of mind which shall furnish any inner reason for pursuing the difficult task of gradually rising above their animal natures, allow themselves to drift. There is, therefore, nothing surprizing in the statement that the number of virtuous old men does not surpass the number of virtuous young men, and that one has a perfect right to mistrust a man who has proved himself a rogue.

This argument of Schopenhauer would be valid if we could prove that all struggle is useless; that a selfish man, in spite of wanting to do so, has never been able to make any

great self-sacrifices. Such a statement is hardly worth considering. One sees cowards facing death for the sake of money. There is not a single passion which could not be held in check by fear of death. Naturally, the egoist's most cherished possession is his life. But have we never seen selfish men, carried away by transitory enthusiasm, sacrificing their existence for their country, or for some other noble cause? If this transitory state has been possible, what has happened during the time of the celebrated *operari sequitur esse?* A character which can transform itself so radically, be it only for half an hour, is not an immutable character, and there is hope of renewing this change more and more frequently.

Moreover, where has Schopenhauer ever met absolutely consistent characters, as, for example, one who was an egoist from first to last in thought and sentiment? Such a simple setting forth of human nature has probably never been seen; and once again, we must say that the belief that the character is a unity, or a homogeneous block, is based on the most superficial observation.

Character is the resultant of heterogeneous forces, and our assertion, based on the observations of living persons and not on abstractions, is strong enough to demolish the naive theories of Kant and Schopenhauer. As to Spencer, it will suffice to point out to his followers that good tendencies are as hereditary, and as firmly organized, as bad ones, and that, by skilfully contriving, one can have as much ancestral power in his favor as against him. At all events, it is only a question of degree, which the following pages of this book, we hope, will decide.

Let us now leave the theory of immutable character, as it is no longer able to stand by itself. Alas, we French, too, have our discouraging theorists, chief among whom is Taine, who, with a narrowness of view, inconceivable in such a great mind, was unable to distinguish fatalism from determinism. In his reaction against Cousinian spiritualism, he went so far as to consider our life independent of our will, and virtue as a manufactured product, like sugar. It was a naive and infantile picture which, by its cynicism, deterred men for a long time

from taking up the study of psychological determinism, and which at the time of its appearance and for a long time after, perverted the meaning of M. Ribot's book on the Diseases of the Will. It is only too true that, in such delicate matters, a host of adversaries is less to be dreaded than a sarcastic and maladroit friend.

It now remains for us to dispose of a bold and most alluring theory which states the possibility of gaining the mastery over self, since, inasmuch as it has presented the struggle for freedom in too easy a light, has caused as much, and even more, discouragement than have the fatalist's theories. We refer to the theory of free will. Free will, which philosophers have tried to associate with moral liberty, has in reality nothing to do with that, for to lead young people to believe that any such long and arduous undertaking as the task of achieving one's freedom can be accomplished with perfect ease, merely by proclaiming that they are free, is to doom them to discouragement from the very beginning. As soon as the young man's enthusiasm has been aroused by the study of

the lives of great men of the past, it is a good plan to call his attention to this most important element of their success, hiding none of the difficulties to be overcome, but at the same time pointing out to him the sureness of triumph if he perseveres.

One can no more become master of himself by proclaiming himself to be free than France became powerful by the *fiat* of 1870. She has had to put forth twenty years of hard and persevering effort, in order to recover her position. In the same way, our personal uplifting must be a work of patience. Why? One sees people spending thirty years in the practise of a difficult profession, in order to be free to retire to the country. Should one grudge the time that must be devoted to such a lofty and noble work as the mastery of one's self?

On our self-mastery depends our true worth, namely, what we ourselves shall become and the rôle which we shall play in life. By means of it we shall be able to inspire both the esteem and respect of every one. It will throw open to us every source of happiness (for all our deepest happiness springs

from well-regulated activity), which is an opportunity that hardly any one who has attained maturity will fail to appreciate. Affected contempt for it evidently hides secret misery, a fact which we have all experienced. What student has not sadly realized the disproportion between his desire to do good work, and the feebleness of his will? "You are free!" the professors say, but we listen to their statement in false despair. No one has taught us that the will may be slowly conquered; no one has thought of studying how to conquer it. No one has trained us for this struggle; no one has helped us, and hence, as a perfectly natural reaction, we fervently accept the doctrines of Taine and the fatalists, which at least console us and help us to be resigned in the useless struggle. And because we shut our eyes to the untruth of these doctrines which connive at our laziness, we let ourselves drift tranquilly on to the rocks.

The real cause of these fatalistic theories concerning the will is the naive and dismal theory of the philosophy of free will! Moral liberty, like political liberty, and everything

else that is of any value in this world, can only be acquired by great effort and incessant struggle. It is the reward of the strong, the skilled and persevering man. No one is free who has not earned the right to be free. Liberty is neither a right nor a condition, it is a reward. It is the highest reward, and the one most productive of happiness. To the daily occurrences of life it is what sunlight is to a landscape. He who has not achieved it misses all the deep and lasting joys of life.

Alas! No question has been made more unintelligible than this vital question of liberty. Bain calls it the "rusty lock" of metaphysics. It is evident that by liberty we understand self-mastery; the sense of assurance in our mind that noble sentiments and moral ideas have ascendency over our animal tendencies. By this, we do not mean that we can become infallible in our self-control, for the centuries are still too few that separate us from our savage cave-dwelling ancestors to allow us to rid ourselves absolutely of the heritage of irascibility, egotism, sensuality and laziness which they

have bequeathed to us. The great saints who triumphed in the ceaseless struggle between their human and their animal natures did not know the joy of serene and uncontested victory.

But let us call attention again to the fact that the work which we are outlining is not as difficult as the work of self-sanctification. For it is one thing to struggle against laziness and passion, and another to attempt absolutely to root out the egotism of one's nature.

But even when reduced to these terms, the combat is long and difficult. Neither the ignorant nor the presumptuous can conquer. There are certain methods to follow which must first be learned, and one must make up one's mind to labor long. To enter the arena without knowing the laws of psychology, or without following the advice of those who know them, is like expecting to win a game of chess over an experienced adversary without knowing the moves of the pieces. But the partizans of such chimerical free will will say that if you can not create, or if you can not by the act of will-

ing give to any motive or impulse a force which it did not naturally possess, then you are not free. Nevertheless, we are indeed free and we do not desire to be otherwise free. Instead of pretending to give force to a motive by a simple volition or by a mysterious whimsical act contrary to all scientific laws, we propose to give it force by the intelligent application of the laws of association of ideas. We can only control human nature when we obey it. The only guarantee of our liberty is found in the laws of psychology, which, at the same time, are the only means by which we can attain freedom. The only liberty there is for us lies in the bosom of determinism.

Here we are at the crucial point of the debate. We are told that, if we do not admit that the will without being accompanied by desire, but simply by its own free initiative, can quicken a feeble impulse to the point of dominating over powerful passions then we presuppose the desire. If a student feels no desire to work, he will never work. Here we are confronted by a predestination more cruel than that of Calvinism. For the

Calvinist predestined to hell does not know it and the hope of heaven never leaves him. But our student, by searching the depths of his conscience, is able to perceive that he has no desire, and that he is lacking in grace, and he therefore concludes that all effort is useless, and that he may as well close the door upon hope.

Here is the question in a nutshell. Either I have, or else I have not, the desire for better things. If I do not have it, all my effort is in vain. But as I am not responsible for my desire, and as grace, like the wind, bloweth where it listeth, I find myself driven to fatalism rather than to predestination. Very well; but in granting this we grant less than would appear. Note that the desire for improvement, however feeble it may be, is sufficient, because by employing the proper means to cultivate it, it can be developed, strengthened, and transformed into a strong and lasting resolution. But some desire there must be, even tho it be the faintest you can imagine. If it does not exist you can do nothing.

We admit this fully; and we believe those

who hold that liberty can be achieved by a single act will allow that one can not base much hope upon a decision to improve one's self which does not rest on some desire for improvement. To perform a difficult piece of work unwillingly, or not to like what one is trying to attain, is to deprive one's self of all chances of success. In order to succeed, one must love his work. But again, a student either possesses or lacks this love or desire. If he lacks it, then he must be hopelessly condemned. We grant the dilemma. Yes, desire is necessary; where there is no desire to become free, there will be no liberty! But the doleful effects of such predestination apply only to that limited number of people whom even the most rabid partizans of free will themselves would consider as having an unfortunate predestination.

In fact, such a group corresponds to those insane persons who suffer from moral insanity. We hold, tho without being able to prove it, because we have never encountered any negative cases, that, if we were to ask any man whosoever not mentally afflicted, if he would prefer the glorious

career of a Pasteur to that of a debased drunkard, he would answer "Yes." Here evidently is a postulate; it is our postulate, and one which no one can contest. But who will contest it?

Are there any men absolutely insensible to the splendor of genius, to beauty, and to moral grandeur? If such a brute exists, or has existed, I confess that I have no interest in him. But if my postulate is true, and true it is for the totality of human mankind, that is enough for me. For, if a person prefers the grandeur of a Socrates, a Regulus or a Vincent de Paul to the ignoble depravity of the most repulsive specimens of the human species, such a preference, no matter how feeble it may be, is quite sufficient. For to prefer implies love and desire. This desire, no matter how fleeting it may be, can be held and protected. It will grow strong if it is cultivated, and will, through the skilfully managed interplay of the laws of psychology, be transformed into a virile resolution. It is thus that from an acorn, which is a meal for a mouse, there arises a powerful oak which defies the hurricane.

We are therefore not at all troubled by being driven to such predestination, since, with the exception of a group of incurable insane, and some few dozen hopeless brutes, we are all predestined to good behavior. Morality therefore does not need to link its fate to such a hazardous, and, let us repeat, such a discouraging theory, as that of free will. Morality needs only liberty, which is quite a different thing, and this liberty is possible only in and by reason of determinism. All that is necessary to establish the possibility of liberty is that our imagination shall be capable of conceiving a plan of life to be realized. Our knowledge and practise of the laws of psychology will enable us, by means of various combinations and alliances, to carry out the main lines of our chosen plan, and to take advantage of time, which is the most powerful factor in accomplishing our freedom, and use it toward that end.

Possibly our conception of liberty may not be as seductive to the lazy man as the theory of free will, but it has the advantage over the latter of being adequate for our

psychological and moral nature, as it really is. It does not expose us to ridicule by letting us haughtily affirm that we possess absolute liberty while our statement is constantly contradicted by our only too evident subserviency to the enemies within. If such a contradiction were merely amusing to the psychological observer, it would not be so bad; but it does not stop there, it goes on producing discouragement in those who have the greatest desire to improve. Furthermore, this theory of free will has prevented many a discerning mind—to our irreparable loss—from studying the conditions of the will.[1]

Now that our path has been cleared of these popular theories concerning the nature of the will, we can get right at the heart of our subject, and take up the study of the psychology of the will.

[1] To be convinced of this it is only necessary to remember into what utter oblivion that very profound psychological work concerning the will, produced by the school of Cousin, has fallen. We refer to the *Tableau de l'activité volontaire pour servire à la science l'éducation,* by Debs. Amiens, 1844.

We believe that Debs died at about the age of 44. There

are many pages in his book showing profound penetration, especially when the date of the work is considered. I call attention to an exposition beginning on page 30, and the following pages, of the theory reproduced by Professor William James, namely, that the will only unites terms in their mental order. What would not so fine a mind as Jouffroy's have done along this line of study, had he not been misled by the whimsical discussion of free will then in fashion. This theory has hindered the study of the will for half a century.

BOOK II

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF THE WILL

I

A STUDY OF THE ROLE THAT IDEAS PLAY IN THE WILL

If the elements of our psychologic life were simple, nothing would be easier than to study the dangers, as well as the resources, which they offer to the work of self-mastery; but these elements are so interdependent, and so combined with one another, that it is very difficult to analyze them in detail.

Nevertheless, it is easy to see that the elements of our inner life fall into three groups: our ideas, our emotional states, and our actions.

The word idea includes many different elements. The most profound distinction which the psychologist, who is interested in the relation of intelligence to the will, can make between our different ideas is to separate them into centripetal ideas and centrifugal ideas. A great many ideas come from the outside; they are what Montaigne called "chaff of the sieve," mere transitory visi-

tants which have not gone through any process of assimilation, and for which our memories seem only a repository.

Ideas wholly at variance with each other lodge side by side in our minds. All of us have in our heads a host of thoughts derived from reading and conversation, and even from our dreams. These, strangers to each other, have taken advantage of our mental laziness to introduce themselves to us, the majority under the authority of some writer or professor. It is in this assembly, where there is good as well as worthless material, that our laziness and sensuousness seek their justification. We are the masters of ideas of this kind. We can bring them into line and develop them after our own fashion. And if we have complete mastery over them they have hardly any over us. The majority are scarcely more than words, and the struggle of words against our laziness and sensuality is like the clashing of an earthen pot against a pot of iron. M. Fouillée has fostered a false point of view by speaking of idea-forces. He has never noticed that the executive force of an idea almost

always comes from its union with those real sources of power which we call the "affective," or emotional, states. Every turn of experience convinces us of the feebleness of ideas. There is a vast difference between purely formal approbation and the active, efficient faith that rouses one to deeds. The moment that the intelligence has to struggle alone, without any outside help, against the brutal array of sensual forces, it is reduced to helplessness. As long as one is in good health, such isolation of the intelligence is impossible: but sickness proves to us very clearly that all force which instigates important actions emanates from sensibility. We do not mean to say that intelligence has no force in itself, but rather that it seems to us quite powerless to eradicate, or repress, our forceful and persistent animal tendencies.

M. Ribot,[1] has shown, by means of striking examples, that when sensibility is profoundly diminished, when there is no joy following sensation, then the idea remains inert and cold; an intelligent man may be-

[1] "Maladies de la volonté," p. 38, seq.

come incapable of even lifting his hand to sign his name. Which one of us, on waking after a restless night with little sleep, has not found himself in just such a condition. Plunged in a state of profound lethargy, our intelligence is as keen as ever, and we see exactly, what we ought to do, but alas! we realize that the idea has little strength in itself. But let us, at such a moment, hear the servant talking outside with a visitor whom he is about to announce, and whom we have wholly forgotten, and the confusion of being found at fault, which is a sentiment, will make us jump out of bed in the greatest haste. In the case which M. Ribot quotes, one gets a vivid illustration of the contrast between the effect of the ideas and that of the feelings. One of the patients of whom he speaks, who was incapable of making the slightest voluntary movement, was the first to jump out of the carriage when it ran over a woman in the road.

Unfortunately, pathological states are looked upon as something apart, while they are in fact only an exaggeration of the reality. Just as a miser is always ready to

laugh at the follies of Harpagan, without ever seeing anything in himself to laugh at, so we refuse to see ourselves in the sharply defined pictures presented to us by mental diseases.

But all our experience convinces us more and more of the powerlessness of the idea. We need hardly refer to the case of alcoholics who know full well the consequences that will follow their drunkenness, but who do not feel them until the first attack of delirium comes, and then it is too late. What is this want of foresight, if not the vision of future threats without the feeling of these threats? The calamity comes. Ah, if I had only known, they say. They did know, but not with that feeling that moving knowledge, which, as far as the will is concerned, is the only thing that counts.

Underneath this superficial layer of ideas which do not penetrate to any depth, are found ideas which can be helped by passing feelings. For example, one may have spent several days in a state of semi-laziness, in reading perhaps, but not be able to get up energy enough to go on with a book which

is lying there waiting to be written, and this in spite of very excellent reasons that we have for doing so. Suddenly, the mail brings us news of the success of some friend, and we are piqued into emulation, and what the most worthy and sensible line of reasoning could not effect, is brought about instantly by a wave of mediocre emotion.

I shall always remember an event that showed me, with unmistakable clearness, the difference between an idea and an emotion. It was in the gray of early dawn when I was crossing a snowbank which sloped so rapidly that its lower part disappeared in the darkness. I began to slip, but did not lose my head for a moment, tho I was perfectly conscious of the fact then that I was in a critical situation, and in extreme danger. I succeeded, even while I was thinking that I was going to be killed, in slowing up a little, and finally in checking my slide altogether about a hundred yards further down. With perfect calmness I walked slowly across the snowbank by the help of my alpenstock, but the moment I found sure footing on the rocks and was definitely saved, I was seized (possibly by

reason of the exhaustion caused by my excessive efforts), with a violent fit of trembling. My heart beat rapidly and I was bathed in a cold perspiration, and then only did I experience a sense of fear and extreme terror. In an instant the *idea* of danger had become a *feeling* of danger.

Lying much deeper than these ideas of external origin, which are adopted provisorily by transitory emotional states, are other ideas which, altho they also come from without, are in harmony with fundamental feelings, and which are so closely bound up with them that one can not say whether the idea has absorbed the emotion, or the emotion the idea. At this point, they become confused with ideas of internal origin coming from the depths of our being which are, as it were, a translation into set terms of our very character and our profoundest tendencies. Our sentient personality gives them a warm coloring: they are, to a certain extent emotions. Like lava, which tho cooled on the surface, will remain molten for years at a certain depth, these ideas retain, even after they have been metamorphosed into

intelligence, the heart of their original emotion. They not only inspire, but sustain, prolonged activity in any given direction.

Nevertheless, it must be distinctly remembered that these ideas are not ideas at all; they are distinct, definite and quick responding substitutes of the feelings; that is to say, of powerful psychological conditions which move slowly, and are cumbersome and difficult to handle. They are very different from the superficial ideas which make up "the external man," and which are often merely words, or signs barren of any significance. Their energy comes to them, as it were, by their roots. It is a borrowed energy which they draw up from the living source of the sentiments and passions—in short, a word from the emotional states. When an idea such as that of which we have spoken is born into a soul that receives it warmly, by some duplex and mysterious phenomenon of endosmosis which we shall study, it draws to itself all the sentiments which it needs to impregnate it, and in some way nourish itself and strengthens itself upon them, and moreover the power of the idea passes into the

sentiments and gives them, not only strength, but direction. The idea is to the feelings what magnetization is to the innumerable currents in a bar of soft iron; it leads them all in the same direction, and destroys conflicting currents, so that, what was only an incoherent mass, becomes an organized current with a hundredfold strength. Thus it sometimes happens in politics, that a happy expression uttered by some popular leader will be enough to swing the various hitherto disorganized anarchical tendencies of democracy sharply around into a definite and organized form.

But reduced to themselves ideas have no power against the brute strength of natural inclinations or tendencies. Who has not at some time had the experience of being seized at night with an absurd unreasoning terror, and of lying in bed, with his heart beating violently, his temples bursting with the rush of blood to his head, and of being incapable of driving away this ridiculous emotion, in spite of the fact that his reason and intelligence were both perfectly clear and active. If any have not had such an experience I

advise them to sit up after midnight when the wind is howling out in the country in the depth of winter, and read the "Walled-up Door," one of Hoffmann's fantastic tales. They will then see for themselves how powerless their intelligence and reason will be to cope with the emotion of fear.

But, without referring to examples of such strong and almost instinctive emotion, one can see the difference in *the effects* produced by ideas and by emotional states, by studying acquired feelings. Compare the purely intellectual parrot-like belief of the citizens of any small French town with the faith of a Dominican monk. The latter, because he feels a religious truth, is able to sacrifice himself utterly, deprive himself of everything that the world holds dear, accept poverty and humiliation and lead a severe, hard life. The citizen whose belief is merely intellectual goes to mass, but feels no sense of repugnance at his egregious selfishness. He is rich, but he works a poor servant pitilessly hard, and gives her scarcely enough to eat while demanding the utmost of her service.

Compare the lightly uttered socialistic

opinions expresst by a demagog, who denies himself no pleasure and spares no expense to gratify his vanity, with the socialism felt by a Tolstoi, who, tho possest of every gift, noble birth, fortune and genius, yet lives the life of a Russian peasant.

In the same way, the idea of the inevitableness of death is with most people merely an abstract conception. This idea which, after all, is so full of consolation and rest, and so calculated to weaken our ambitions and check our proud and selfish impulses, and heal the source of all our troubles, has nevertheless no influence upon our conduct. How could it be otherwise, when, even by those who are condemned to death, this idea is seldom felt till the last moment. Dickens writes of the sentence of Fagin:

"Not that, all this time, his mind was, for an instant free from one oppressive overwhelming sense of the grave that opened at his feet: it was ever present to him, but in a vague and general way, and he could not fix his thoughts upon it. Thus, even while he trembled, and turned burning hot at the idea of speedy death, he fell to counting the

iron spikes before him, and wondering how the head of one had been broken off, and whether they would mend it or leave it as it was. Then, he thought of all the horrors of the gallows and the scaffold—and stopt to watch a man sprinkling the floor to cool it—and then went on to think again.'' [1]

It is unnecessary to go on multiplying examples. Each one searching in his own past experience can collect a large number of characteristic facts that will coincide with our conclusions. Ideas by themselves do not constitute a force. They would be a force, provided they were the only thing in consciousness; but, as they often find themselves in conflict with the emotional states, they are obliged to borrow from feelings the force which they lack when they come to struggle against them.

The powerlessness of ideas is all the more deplorable because we have them completely under our control. The easily regulated determinism of the association of conscious states gives us almost absolute freedom in the matter of the intellect.

[1] Charles Dickens, ''Oliver Twist,'' ch. 52.

By the very laws of association themselves, we are able to break the chain of associated states and to introduce new elements into them and then connect the chain again. While I am casting around for an example to illustrate this theoretical statement, chance which faithfully looks after all those who pursue an idea, has offered me one. A factory whistle blows. This sound, against my will, has interrupted the train of ideas which I was following and has suddenly introduced to my consciousness a picture of the sea with a background of strong mountain peaks, and then comes the beautiful panorama which is seen from the quays of Bastia. This is because the whistle had exactly the same sound as that of the steamboat which for three years I so often heard there. Ah well! you want freedom. Here it is. It is the law of the strongest. The direct presentation of a state is, as a rule, stronger than the representation of it in memory—and if the whistle can break a train of thoughts which we wish to follow, we can deliberately make use of such an effect. We can, if we wish to free

ourselves from some association of ideas, introduce a strong presentation of an idea or thing that will violently break the chain. There is one presentative state that is particularly easy and convenient, viz., movement, and among movements those which constitute language. One can pronounce words out loud, or one can read them. One can even scourge one's self, as the saints do in moments of temptation, and thus violently break the train of dangerous associations. Any idea which we want to use as a starting-point for a new direction of thoughts, in order to gain a victory over another line of thoughts, we can drag in, as it were, by force.

We are, moreover, wonderfully aided in our endeavors by the great law of memory. All recollection, in order to be deeply graven, must be repeated frequently, and for a long time. There is first the need of keen and sympathetic attention, if I may so describe it. The cerebral substrata of the chain of ideas which we have expelled from our consciousness and which we keep in exile, fade and disappear, and with their own atrophy bring about the effacement of

corresponding ideas. We are thus masters of our thoughts; we can pull up the weeds and can even destroy that portion of the ground that bore them.

On the other hand, when we wish to keep the associations that are presented and to let them develop, we first take great pains to eliminate all the presentative conditions which are foreign to our object and which lie ready to obtrude themselves upon our consciousness.

We find a quite calm place, and we even close our eyes if the web of our thoughts is woven of fragile stuff. Furthermore, we make use of the right presentative states that will help us; we speak out loud, or we write our thoughts; for writing more than anything else is a wonderful aid to prolonged meditation. It sustains thought and calls in the movements of the hand and the eyes to aid and abet the ideas. In myself I find a natural propensity which has been strongly cultivated by my profession. I can not read without articulating, so that for me thought is strengthened by three lines of presentative sensations, I might even say by four, as

it is difficult to articulate without hearing the word.[1]

In summing up, we see that it is because we have full control of our muscles, especially those of the organs of sense or those which we bring into play in language, that we are able to free ourselves from the bondage of the association of ideas. There may be differences in each one of us according to our nature. In practical psychology, it is not at all permissible to generalize concerning any special case, for new types are discovered every day, which hitherto were not distinguished from the others.[2] But for myself, the only reminder that I have at my

[1] It is well known that the memory of a word is very complex, and that it is composed of four elements: (1) a motive image (the pronouncing of the word), (2) a visual image (the word in print or in manuscript), (3) an auditory image (the sound of the word as it is spoken), (4) a graphic motor image (the writing of the word). As thought is impossible without language, it is evident in all thought there must be woven one or more strands formed by these images of which we have just spoken. When we write we should weave together all four strands to sustain our thought.

[2] Cf. Ribot, "L'Évolution des idées Générales." F. Alcan, 1891.

disposal and the one I always call in first, when I wish to break in on a line of thought and change it to another, is to imagine some movement. I have control over my thoughts only because I am master of my muscles.

From the point of view of the self-education of the will, the conclusion of this chapter is somewhat discouraging. We can master our ideas, but alas! the strength of our ideas, in the struggle against laziness and sensuality, is hardly appreciable. Let us see whether we shall attain a happier result in studying the resources which the emotional states offer us in the work of mastering self.

II

THE ROLE OF THE EMOTIONAL STATES IN THE WILL

The possibilities of power that the emotional states have over our wills can not be exaggerated. They can do anything; they can even make us face suffering and death without hesitation. To state their power, is simply to state an empirical law of the universe. But can this empirical law be transformed into a scientific law; that is to say, can a higher law be derived from it, and be considered as a conclusion deduced from an evident truth?

If we analyze sentiment, separating from one another the mingled elements of which it is composed, we find that we can compare it to an adagio of Beethoven in which there is a fundamental motif running through all the variations, now almost disappearing and now standing out clearly. Such a phrase recurring again and again in a thousand forms is, as it were, the soil in its variety

and unity, which brings life to the musical creation. This motif sustaining the whole adagio with its wonderful richness, illustrates the way in which an elementary theme can underlie an emotion or sentiment. It is this theme which gives to the sentiment its unity. Upon it there may be developed variations of richest sensations, of pleasure, grief, and memory. But through all of them runs the theme which gives the particular tone to these secondary elements. As human beings, according to Descartes, do not exist except by a continuous creation of God, so even our pleasures, our griefs, our sensations, and our memories have no reality, except by a sort of continued creation, through the living energy of the theme by which they are glorified. Without it, one would have nothing but a collection of cold, dry, purely abstract psychological conditions without color and without force.

This inner depth of force in the emotions explains why they have such robust power. In fact, what are these underlying tendencies, if not our natural activity and ardent wishes which through the powerful dis-

cipline of pain, have been obliged to restrict their development in many directions, and to submit themselves to the inevitable choice, either of perishing or of following along certain channels, which means along the line of certain specially organized tendencies?

Activity without the discipline of pain would be scattered in all directions and weakened: experience has taught it to move along the line of certain tendencies, and these tendencies, one sees, are, after all, our sensual primitive energy, which in molten streams breaks through the superficial crust of acquired ideas and of secondary sentiments of the outside world. It is our living force which flows into the proper muscles, and is transmuted into habitual acts. This in itself explains the motor power of the inclinations. They consist of a group of movements, or rather of a number of elementary movements. For example, the muscular material brought into play by anger, or the emotion of love, is, in the main, always the same in every instance. It is, moreover, practically the same for the entire human race. Whatever it is, it has ex-

isted in innumerable generations, which have transmitted its existence to us. On this rather ancient fabric, each one embroiders his own personal pattern; but the general effect is so coherent, that even babes in their cradles know the meaning of it. This connection between a certain tendency and a certain group of muscles has been transmitted by heredity. It is a bond of great antiquity. One can readily see how these strands, with which I might deliberately connect a certain idea with a certain muscular movement, would have very little strength compared with those other bonds which had become automatic. The only chance that such would have of not being broken in this unequal struggle would be, as one can foresee, by seeking alliance and making common cause with hereditary tendencies: in this way, one could risk a struggle, for the fragile web connecting the idea with the movement would not have to bear the brunt of the strain. The force that lies in sentiment or feeling is shown by the richness of its results.

A strong feeling may disturb psychological

conditions which are apparently wholly independent of it, as for instance the perception of real objects. It is true that all perception, even elementary perception, is an interpretation of certain signs. I do not see an orange; I only judge by certain signs that it must be an orange. But with habit, this interpretation becomes instantaneous and automatic and consequently is not easily disturbed. It is quite possible for a strong emotion to drive away the true interpretation and to suggest a hallucinatory one which takes the place of the other in our consciousness. Without stopping to speak of fear in the night, which puts the most absurd interpretation upon perfectly natural noises, we may remind ourselves how hatred can blind us to the most evident facts. If any one is tempted to call to account the curiously false ideas that mothers have concerning the beauty of their children, they should recall Molière's clever little sally in which he laughs at the illusions created by love:

The sallow girl is like a pearl, the fairest he has met,
The swarthy one from whom men run, a ravishing brunette.

But our perception is not the only thing

which is led astray by our feelings. Strong feelings have no consideration for weak feelings. For example, and we shall soon have reason to emphasize this fact, vanity, which is a very powerful sentiment in most people, can drive all well-established sentiments completely out of mind. Our sentiments of what is proper and fashionable are very largely suggested by our *amour propre.* These strangers strut into our consciousness and cover up our true feelings, just as a specter appearing against the wall seems to hide the pattern of the tapestry from the person who has the hallucination as effectually as a person who was really present would do. As a result of such autosuggestion, the student sacrifices the true joys of his youth and environments to imaginary pleasures, which, when stript of the glamour of the sentiments suggested by his vanity, or by the pace which his fellows set, he finds worthless. It is for this reason that worldly people, whose tastes and incapacity have made them superficial, and who never go down deep enough in their own hearts to find out what their real feelings are, so often turn

out in middle life to be stupid and vapid, tho apparently busy with many interests. They get into the habit of imagining that they are really feeling the conventional sentiments which it is the proper thing in their world to appear to feel, and this habit finally kills in them the possibility of experiencing real emotions. This subjection to "what people would say" turns out very agreeable and polished individuals without the slightest originality, pretty mechanical puppets who are worked by strings in other people's hands. Even in the deepest experiences of life, they only feel conventional emotions.

It is very evident that if we can juggle with our perceptions and our sentiments which are fairly stable and permanent, the emotional states would have no difficulty in disturbing those delicate psychological conditions known as memories. And as all judgment and all belief depend on gaining more or less complete information, followed by a precise valuation of the elements of the information, it is evident that the feelings could have tremendous consequences in this direction. "The chief use to which we put our

love of truth, is to persuade ourselves that what we love is true."[1] We nearly all of us imagine that we take sides, that we choose between several paths that are open to us. Alas! Our decision has nearly always taken place in us, and is not taken by us. There is no participation of our conscious will. Our tendencies, sure of their final victory, consent after a fashion to let our intelligence look the matter over; they are quite willing to grant her the empty satisfaction of believing herself queen, tho in reality she is only a constitutional queen, who appears before the public and makes speeches, but who does not govern.

In fact, the intelligence which so docilely submits to the violence of the emotional states, does not get much satisfaction from the will. The will is not fond of carrying out the cold orders it receives from the intelligence. As it is the organ of all power and feeling, it wants emotional orders tinged with passion. Pathology has shown us the case of a man who was absolutely incapable of making a decision, eagerly leaping out of a car-

1 Nicol, "De la connaissance de soi," Vol. I, Chap. 6.

riage before any one else to help a woman who had been run over.[1] This is what a special volition can do.

With greater reason, a strong and powerful will should be sustained by sentiments which are in themselves powerful, and if not constantly, at least should be frequently excited. "Strong feeling," says Mill, "is the instrument and element of strong self-control; but it requires to be cultivated in that direction. When it is, it forms not the nerves of impulse only, but those also of self-conquest. History and experience prove that the most passionate characters are the most fantastically rigid in their feelings of duty, when their passion has been trained to act in that direction."[2] Let any one observe himself carefully and he will see that apart from the acts which have become automatic by habit, all volition is preceded by a wave of emotion, an effective perception of the act to be accomplished. We have just seen that the idea of the work which we had on hand

[1] Ribot, "Maladie de la volonté," loc. cit., p. 48 and 52 note. F. Alcan.

[2] Mill, "The Subjection of Women"; Ribot, "Maladies de la volonté," 117, 118, 169.

was not enough to make us spring out of bed, while the feeling of shame at being caught in bed, after announcing that we made a practise of getting up at dawn, was sufficiently moving to make us hurry into our clothing. Also a feeling that some one has done us an injustice will drive us to protest that we were not to blame, etc.

Moreover, the rather irrational kind of education that is given to the children of the present day is founded in part on a vague perception of the truth. The system of rewards and punishments rests on the confused belief that the emotions alone are able to stir the will into action. The children in whom sensibility is at a very low level are exceedingly difficult to educate in the matter of the will, and therefore in all directions. "It must be acknowledged that of all the trials of education none is to be compared with that of trying to bring up children who lack sensibility, their thoughts are mere distractions. They hear everything and they feel nothing."[1]

If we look upon social bodies and their

[1] Fénelon, "Education des filles," Chap. 4.

wills as the magnification of what goes on among individuals, we shall see very clearly that ideas lead people only indirectly, and with the help of sentiments. "The advent of an idea," says Micheles, "is not so much the first appearance of it as a formula, as it is the moment when it really begins to develop, when, impregnated by the force of the heart and nurtured in the powerful warmth of love, it bears fruit for the world."[1] Spencer maintains with good reason that the world is led by the emotions. Stuart Mill objects to this.[2] "Because," he says, "it was not human emotions and passions which discovered the movement of the earth." Assuredly not. But this discovery has depended for its results on very powerful sentiments, without which it would have had no influence on human conduct. Such an idea springs up in the mind of a Pascal or a Spinoza. In the case of the latter, especially his feeling of the utter insignificance of our globe in the universe, with the resulting feeling of our

[1] "Les Femmes de la Révolution," 1854, p. 321.

[2] "Aug. Comte et le Positioisme," p. 100 seq. Trans. Clemenceau F. Alcan.

own non-entity, so profoundly affected him, that no one can read his books intimately without experiencing to some degree, a feeling of sublime calm in the presence of the eternal verities. But it could hardly be said that this discovery had produced practical effects only upon meditative philosophers, because they alone have been aroused to deep emotions. The will of a nation, or of a political party, is one of its resulting affective stages (its daily interests, fears, sympathies, etc.). It must be admitted that abstract ideas are not very efficacious in leading a people. It is not necessary to do more than to call our readers' attention to this point. They will find numerous illustrations in history of the feeble effect of abstract ideas as contrasted with the power of emotions.

They will distinguish between pure ideas and emotions, and see how far suffering, anger, fear, and hope have helped to feed the flame of patriotism which burns in all of us. As for individual examples, the most casual glance at the "comedy of life" will furnish them by the dozens. In addition to the illustrations quoted at the beginning of this

chapter, they will note how the very pious who would not dream of neglecting a church service, will tear their "friends'" reputations to pieces. They will see political men parading their philanthropy, when they would recoil with disgust from the idea of visiting stuffy garrets and coming in contact with the unclean and vulgar poor. They will be perfectly paralyzed at certain disturbances in their own consciences provoked by sensuality, and they will stand aghast at the ignoble ideas, which a secretion accumulated in the body is capable of exciting in a mind which as a rule is under perfect control. As a result of this feeling of helplessness they are driven to the idea of sacrificing absolutely, not only their own existence, but even that self-esteem which can produce a profound religious sentiment.

They impress upon their minds the truth of the saying in the "Imitation of Christ," *qui amat non laborat*. For when one loves, all work is easy and delightful. They will see how lightly the maternal passion will overthrow ideas of honor and patriotism. "Let him live! I care not if he be disgraced! Only

let him live!'' And they will also see an inverse phenomenon in the ardent patriotism of a Cornelia, and realize that the most powerful emotions can be successfully opposed by secondary and artificially created emotions. This example proves the possibility of uprooting the deepest instinctive sentiments. After glancing at such cases, however rapidly, no one could refuse to admit the complete power of the affective, or emotional, states over the will.

Unfortunately, if the emotional side of our nature is decidedly the stronger in our psychological life, our power over it is apt to be weak. And what is more serious, an examination of facts convinces us not only that this weakness is real, but that it could not be otherwise. This helplessness is, in fact, a result of nature as well as a sentiment.

We have shown elsewhere that all communications with the outer world must necessarily be through the action of our muscles: if no muscles, then no external expression. Therefor all impulse coming from without, by whatsoever channel, has the power of provoking a response from the being who

receives it. A muscular response of course is understood. External impressions are extremely different; hence the wide range of muscular adjustments. But under whatever form a muscular action takes place, it makes necessary an expenditure of energy. Nature has ingeniously provided for this expenditure. When an impression strikes the senses, the heart suddenly begins to beat more rapidly, the respiration is accelerated, and all the functions of nutrition are, as it were, touched up with a whip. This instantaneous physiological flutter is what really constituted an emotion. The emotion is only strong in proportion as this flutter or quickening is strong, and if it is lacking, the emotion is also lacking. Now this flutter is automatic, and, what is more, it is almost wholly beyond the control of our will, which is very annoying to us, as masters of ourselves.[1]

We can neither stop, nor even directly modify, our heart beats. We can not calm a spasm of terror by preventing the semi-

[1] "Revue philosophique," May, 1890. "Sensation, plaisir et douleur," F. Alcan.

paralysis of the intestines. No one can be more deeply imprest than we ourselves with the idea that the men who are masters of themselves are extremely rare, and that liberty is the recompense of prolonged efforts which few people have the courage to attempt. The result is, that nearly all men are slaves to the law of determinism, and are guided by their vanity and their irritable impulses. And in consequence, as Nicole has said, they are in the great majority of instances "marionettes" which one can not but pity.

However basely they may treat one, the only truly philosophical attitude one can adopt toward them is that of calm, superior serenity. Let *Alceste,* who believes in free will, storm and rage—without accomplishing anything by it, for that is the law of nature, but give us the smiling tranquil attitude of *Philinte.*

> Altho within my anger burns the same
> As yours in you, yet no one sees the flame.
> But none the less I look with like disgust,
> On selfish men who show themselves unjust,
> As on malicious apes or beasts of prey,
> Or greedy vultures hovering o'er the fray.

This theoretically is what the attitude of the thinker should be. If he must avenge himself, let him do so calmly. But, properly speaking, the truly wise man does not seek vengeance. He only tries to protect his future by correcting those who disturb his mental poise, in such a way that henceforth they will understand that it is better to leave him in peace. Instead of this lofty calm, what do we behold? Our self-esteem is wounded or some malicious gossip is brought to us, and immediately, in spite of ourselves, we have a physiological reaction. Our heart begins to beat irregularly and convulsively. It behaves as if its action were ruined. Its contractions are imperfect, spasmodic and painful. The blood is sent rushing to the brain in violent jerks, congesting that delicate organ and starting up a torrent of violent thoughts, visions of vengeance, and absurd, exaggerated impractical ideas. Our philosophy looks on helplessly at this wholly animal outbreak of passion, which it disapproves of and deplores. Why this helplessness? Simply because our emotions have invariably an antecedent visceral disturb-

ance over which our wills have no control. And not being able to moderate this organic disturbance, we can not prevent its reaction from invading our consciousness and being translated into psychological terms.

Is it necessary to multiply examples? Does not what we call our sensibility, or emotion, furnish us with crucial proof of the organic cause of physical disturbances? Does not our transitory rage, as well as our automatism of ideas, cease as soon as the physiological cause ceases? It is necessary to refer again to the example of fear we have just analyzed? Is it not perfectly clear that we must be without control over our emotions because their underlying causes, being physiological in nature, are beyond our control?

Let me analyze a personal experience, which will plainly show how unequal the conflict is, when our thoughts try to struggle with our viscera. One day word was brought to me that my child, who had started out in the morning to make a visit, had not reached the house of the friend who expected him. My heart immediately started to beat more

quickly. But I began to reason with myself, and at once thought of a plausible excuse for his non-appearance. All the same, my extreme anxiety over the circumstance and the idea suggested by, I do not know whom, that the child might have gone to play by the edge of a very deep and rapid stream near the house, succeeded in upsetting me. Altho I immediately realized that the horrible possibility was extremely improbable, nevertheless the physiological agitation of which we have spoken became extreme. My heart beat as tho it would burst. I had a painful bristling sensation on my scalp as tho my hair were standing up on end. My hands trembled and the wildest ideas ran through my brain, in spite of all my efforts to chase away my fears, which my judgment told me were unreasonable. The child was found after a half-hour search, but my heart still continued to beat violently. The curious thing was that this agitation, which I had so earnestly tried to ignore, feeling, as it were, frustrated of its end, seemed determined to find expression, and drove me (for the material workings of anger and

anxiety are obviously the same) to make a scene with the poor servant, who could not help what had happened. All at once I stopt short, struck by the expression of grief on the poor girl's face, and I decided to let the tempest die down of itself, which, however, took some time.

Each one of us can make similar observations upon himself, and each one will arrive at the same doleful conclusion, that we can have no direct power over our emotions.

We seem to be driven into a corner. The task of mastering self is evidently an impossible one. The title of this book is a snare, and the education of self is a delusion.

On the one hand, I can control only my thoughts. The intelligent use of determinism makes me free and allows me to make use of the laws of association of ideas. But the idea is a helpless thing. It has only a mock power over the brute forces against which we must struggle.

On the other hand, if the emotions are so strong in us; if they domineer in their own fashion over our perceptions, memories, judgments, and reasonings, and if the fiercer

emotions even annihilate the tenderer ones; if, in a word, they exercise almost unlimited despotism, they will remain tyrants to the end, and will never take orders from our reason or bow to our will. The only resources with which we are bountifully supplied are resources which we can not use. The constitution which rules our psychological life bestows the greater power upon the undisciplined and ungovernable serf. Our intellectual powers are powers only in name. They are allowed a voice in consultation, but not in the deliberative body.

There seems nothing else to do except to throw down our lance and shield in despair and leave the field of combat; to accept our defeat meekly and to take refuge in fatalism, which at least will furnish us with consolation for our weaknesses, laziness and cowardice.

Fortunately, the position is not quite so desperate as one might be tempted to believe. The strength which the intellect does not possess may be given to it by a very potent factor which we have not yet mentioned. What the great liberating power

can not actually accomplish of itself, time in the long run will accord. The freedom which can not be achieved immediately can be brought about by stratagem and by indirect measures.

But before setting forth the method by which we may free ourselves, it would be as well not to overlook any of our resources, and to find out whether, possessing little or no control over the essential in our emotional states, we could not do something to influence the secondary elements of the emotions.

We have no direct psychological means of controlling any of the essentially physiological material which includes the majority of the organs, and chiefly the heart, which are not under the control of the will. Our only methods of affecting them is from the outside, and are therapeutic measures. A violent fit of temper could be calmed by taking a little digitalis, which has the power of regulating the heart-beats.

One can stop the most violent sexual excitement by the use of anodynes. One can overcome laziness, either physical or mental torpor, by taking coffee. But this beverage

quickens the heart-beats and gives them a spasmodic action, and predisposes many people to nervous irritability. In a great many nervous people coffee causes dyspnœa and a sensation of constriction and trembling of the limbs. It also has a tendency to make them feel deprest and anxious without sufficient cause, and even to be subject to unreasonable terrors.

But such means of treatment are soon summed up, and all taken together are hardly worth considering in the effect they would have in giving us direct control over the emotions.

This conclusion, however, does not apply in at all the same way to anything pertaining to the emotions that find their expression in muscular action. The external expression of the emotion is under our control, for we have the power to perform or to refuse to perform certain movements. There is a constant association between emotion and its external expression. For it is a fundamental law in psychology that when any two elements have been frequently associated together, one has a tendency to awaken the other.

It is in accordance with this law that the most profound of the practical psychologists who have taken up the question of the education of the sentiments, Ignatius Loyola, as well as Pascal, recommended external acts of faith as very helpful in bringing the mind into a corresponding emotional state. One knows that in the condition of hypnotic sleep an attitude which expresses an emotion is able to suggest the latter. Whatever passion one may wish to have exprest by the patient's attitude, springs suddenly into existence the moment the muscles that are necessary to manifest this passion are brought into play, and the whole organization responds to it.[1]

Dugald-Stewart relates that Burke assured him that he had often experienced the fact that his anger grew hotter in proportion as he allowed himself to indulge in the external signs of passion. Is it not true that dogs and children, and even grown-up people, who begin to fight with each other in play, generally end up by getting angry with each other in earnest? Are not tears as well as laughter

[1] Cf Braid, "Neurypnology."

contagious? Is it not a common saying that the more foolish one is, the more one laughs? Is not a doleful, morose person like a wet-blanket, not to say a veritable calamity for any family? Were not the laws of the Chinese ceremonial expressive of the homage due to high authority, deliberately established by Confucius, who, like Loyola perceived that gestures tended to express corresponding sentiments? Are not Catholic pomps, with their profoundly psychologic ceremonials, singularly well adapted to make a deep impression on even the incredulous mind? I defy any of the faithful to keep back a feeling of reverence in his soul, at the moment when the chants are followed by the profound silence in which the faithful with one accord bow themselves before the Eternal. In accordance with the same ideas, does not the visit of a friend, who is bubbling over with gaiety, pull us out of the depths and set us cheerfully upon our feet? It is unnecessary to go on adding examples; one can find them so easily everywhere one looks.

Unfortunately, what is aroused are feelings which already existed. They may be

awakened, and revivified by such association, but they are not created. The sentiments thus called forth will remain very weak. The process acts from without, and what is within can hardly be considered as more than a valuable aid. It serves rather to maintain the feeling in the full light of consciousness. It does what we have seen movements, and especially writing, do for thought. It is of great value in preventing distractions which cause the attention to wander. It helps to hold our states of consciousness in their proper order and to prevent them from breaking their chain of sequence, which they are always ready to do by letting some new states be introduced. But to think one could thus introduce into the mind any feeling whose germ was not already there, or even were it already there but only in germ, is to be ignorant that the essential element of all sentiment evades our grasp.

Nevertheless, when an emotion wells up within us, we can refuse to allow ourselves to express it externally. For the expression of anger, it is positively necessary to have the fist clenched, the jaws set, the muscles of

the face contracted, and to pant as one draws one's breath. I can command my muscles to relax and my lips to smile; I can check my spasmodic breathing and draw my breath slowly. But if I have not tried to extinguish the first faint sparks of passion, or to stamp out the kindling fire, but have fanned the emotion to a flame, and let it grow, my efforts will in all probability be useless, especially if the will does not call from within the help of other emotions, such as the feeling of personal dignity, the fear of an outbreak, etc. One could make the same statement for sensual feeling. If the spirit is the accomplice of desire, if the interior resistance is weak, the resistance of the muscles which are the agents of desire will not last long. And as a general rule, it is of no use trying to blockade the enemy by constructing outworks against him, provided the invading troops feel that their chiefs are weak and are ready to surrender. This refusal of the muscles to obey passion ought to be energetically upheld by all the internal powers which are connected with it. Our direct influence to excite an emotion in the mind or to check it, or to

render it helpless, and above all to destroy a feeling, is therefore weak. The only thing that these external means can furnish us is perhaps a supplement; a very precious supplement undoubtedly, but which can only augment an internal action which is already strong.

If, however, we were confined to the present, if we lived from day to day without forethought, it would be useless to strive. We would helplessly watch the conflict of ideas, emotions and passions going on within us. The struggle would be interesting, but our intelligence would be a spectator discouraged in advance. It could find some amusement, as one does in betting on the races, by predicting what the issue of the struggle would be; and would in the end probably acquire a sort of infallibility in this prognosis. In fact, in the majority of people the intelligence plays no other rôle than that, because nearly all are the dupes of their feelings. Because they foresee what is going to happen, and because it happens exactly as their desires wish it to happen, they believe themselves free. The intelligence, ashamed of its

helplessness, loves to delude itself with the idea that its power is sovereign. But in reality the natural tendencies deal with the matter without it. It has no more influence on the issue of the conflict, than the meteorologist, who knows that the rain will fall tomorrow, has upon the degree of saturation of the atmosphere.

But the outcome, an outcome well merited by those who have made no effort to conquer their liberty, is by no means unavoidable. One can attain the power of being a law unto one's self. The liberty which the present refuses to us, time will enable us to achieve. It is time that strikes off our chains. Time is the sovereign power which frees our intelligence, and makes it possible for it to throw off the bondage of passions and animal instincts. For emotional states of every kind are but blind and brutal forces, and it is the fate of people who can not see ahead of them, even tho they be Hercules, to be led by those who see clearly. The intelligence must, to become qualified, ally itself with endurance; that is to say, by patient, calm, but persistent, measures; it

can slowly but surely possess itself of power and even authority, an authority that will be modified only by the laziness of the sovereign, or the temporary revolts of the subject.

We now must study the nature and effects of this freedom, which can be brought about by time. We will then study practical ways of attaining this freedom.

III

THE KINGDOM OF INTELLIGENCE

In undertaking the conquest of self it is of the utmost importance to form strong bonds of habit between ideas and conduct—bonds that will so absolutely unite them that whenever an idea comes into the mind the action will follow it with the precision and vigor of a reflex. But, as we have learned with discouraging certainty, the emotions alone can cause reactions in this semi-automatic fashion. Such a bond between an idea—the idea of work, for example—and its transformation into actions will never be formed when one is indifferent and cold.

It is necessary, therefore, if we would weld an idea solidly and indestructibly to a desired action, that we should fuse them together by the heat of an emotion.

It is possible for them in this way to become irrevocably united. What else is education but the bringing into play of powerful feelings to create habits of thought and action; that is

to say, the organization in the child's mind of a system of connections in which ideas are bound to other ideas, or ideas to feelings, or ideas to acts? It is at first because he is driven by fear, or self-conceit, or by the desire to please his parents, that a child little by little gains sufficient control over his attention to enable him to check his natural tendencies to make a noise and jump around, and to keep himself clean and at work. In other words, one must take advantage of strong natural feelings, and direct them properly in order to break the connection between certain tendencies and their natural expression, and to form certain strong ties between certain ideas and certain actions, which did not before exist.

The religious emotions of any epoch, or of any profoundly devout movement, have a force of extreme energy, because they are composed of powerful feelings which are themselves elemental and which are bound into a coherent group. The fear of public opinion, the respect for the authority of persons clothed with sanctity, the memories accumulated by education, the fear of external

punishments, the hope of heaven, the terror of a just and omnipresent God who sees everything and listens to everything, discerning even one's most secret thoughts, all these are as it were, melted together into an extremely complex emotional state, which, however, appears simple to the mind. In the burning heat of these strong feelings a link is forged between ideas and actions. This explains the reason why in superior religious natures an injury does not provoke anger—in such people the idea of resignation has become so strong and sincere—and also it explains why there is no struggle necessary to preserve chastity. Because that sensual excitement which enters the minds of those morally inferior has been annihilated, curbed and purified. Such are excellent examples of the triumph over our most powerful inherent tendencies, which may be won by the single-handed antagonism of our nobler sentiments.

Renan said, "I feel that my life is still governed by a faith which I no longer hold, for faith has that peculiar quality of continuing to act even after it has disappeared." This is true not alone of faith. Any deep emotion

which, during any length of time, has bound certain actions to certain ideas, may disappear, but it leaves the bond which it has formed behind it, just as in a syllogism the middle term may disappear, but the conclusion can be reached.

But among similar relations, which are so easily established by feelings, ideas can also group themselves in such a way as to gain control of the emotional states. Nothing is more common. In the education which we receive in the family and at school, our parents and our teachers, as we have already seen, can weld any chain of connections which they wish. The same is true in religion.

But when we ourselves undertake the education of ourselves, this is no longer so. The task is much more complicated, it requires a profound knowledge of our own psychological nature and its resources. When school-days are over, the young people who have hitherto been guided by their parents or their teachers, and who have been held by rule to definite regular hours of work, all at once find themselves thrown upon their own responsibility in a large city, without any special prepara-

tion, without oversight, often without advice and, above all, without any definitely appointed duties; for, to read for an examination for a degree is by no means the same thing as to have one's hours of work laid out from day to day by some one else. There are no more good marks by which to check one's work, and to serve as the only incentive. How remote all that now seems, and how inefficacious; before that dreaded ordeal that is coming at the end of the year.

But the majority of students who are received in spite of not having worked, banish their fears and only begin to work during the last months. It is going to be necessary then for the student, surrounded by untoward conditions, to subordinate everything to the leadership of an idea, and find support in sentiments which are already existing in him.

This is a question of tactics, but first we must review our resources, so that we shall omit none, and examine closely the question of how to bring about the necessary connection between certain ideas and certain lines of conduct.

We shall first take up the relations of the idea to those emotional forces which are favorable to the mastery of self.

The philosophers, alas! too few in number, who have interested themselves in the relation between intelligence and feeling, are inclined to distinguish two kinds of knowledge, the purely intellectual and the knowledge that comes from the heart.[1] This is an incorrect way of stating a fundamental truth. All knowledge is intellectual, but when the knowledge is accompanied by an emotion there is an intimate mingling of the intellectual elements with those of feeling, and the feeling which in certain ways is more overpowering and intense than the idea, places itself in the full light of consciousness, and throws its associated idea into the shade. We have already seen examples of cold dispassionate ideas, which, suddenly awakened violent emotions, so much so, that the idea henceforward could not rise into consciousness without bearing the memory of the emotion along with it—a memory which, after

[1] Compare Clay, "L'Alternative," trans. Burdeau, p. 229. F. Alcan.

all, was only an emotion in the act of being armed. It is thus that, since my own vivid experiences,[1] I have never been able to imagine myself sliding down an icy slope without immediately experiencing a feeling of dizziness. Here there has been established a connection between an idea and an emotional state which was hitherto unknown, and which unfortunately became automatic, following a single experience. Can such connections be artificially formed? If the reply were negative, there would be nothing further to do concerning the education of the will. But we have just seen, that all education is based on this possibility. Nevertheless, can a student who is under no restraint, who has only himself to depend on, accomplish for himself as much as parents and teachers? If he can not, the education of one's self by one's self would be impossible.

That such associations must be difficult to establish is very certain. That they require time and perseverance is also certain. But that they are possible, is, we believe, more certain still. Therefore this possibility is

[1] See below, Book II, Chap. I, Sec. 1.

our hope of freedom. To make such a statement is equivalent to stating that we are free. Well, we do not hesitate to make the statement. Yes, we are free; each one of us, if he desires to, can associate certain sentiments with the idea of a disagreeable bit of work which will, as a consequence, make it easy. We say sentiments in the plural, because, as a rule, with the intellectual worker, this association calls into play a great many emotional states. Furthermore, it is rarely the result of a single experience as in the example already quoted. We proceed as a designer does, with successive pencil-strokes; each association brought into play leaves in our consciousness, thanks to the law of habit which begins to act from the first moment of experience, some strokes of an outlined sketch. Those which we achieve in moments of strong energy bear decisive traits which will put the finishing touches to the rough outline of the work which will be completed by patient retouching and filling in.

This slow elaboration is necessary because solitary work of the mind is so foreign to human nature. Sustained and persevering

attention is so difficult for a young man, that, in order to struggle against the dislike which he feels for any work in which he must steadily concentrate his attention upon one idea, he needs to marshal and drill all the emotional forces which he can muster to strengthen his will in its resistance to the fatal power of inertia and laziness.

Thus if one asks what it is that sustains the energy in the long and wearisome series of efforts that must be put forth when we start in upon the task of writing a long book, into which we throw our hearts, we would answer that we find a powerful coalition of feelings all pointing toward the same end; the feeling of energy which gives to work such a degree of vigor; meditation rewarded by its results and by the joys of discovery; the feeling of superiority which the pursuit of a noble aim gives us; the feeling of strength and physical well-being which comes from using all our pent-up energy in a profitable manner.

We may add to these strong motives the consciousness of the esteem of those who, while doing nothing themselves, nevertheless

follow us, some with perfect sympathy, and others with a slight tinge of jealousy, and also the joy of seeing our intellectual horizon grow wider. And further, we must add the satisfaction of our self-esteem, our ambitions and anticipations; the joy of seeing those who are dear to us happy, and finally the noblest of motives: the feeling that one can help many young people who are going astray, through ignorance of the path they should follow, to arrive at that science of sciences, the government of self. Selfish interest in the present and in the future, as well as altruistic and impersonal feelings, all provide us with a rich abundance of tendencies, emotions, and passions which we can call to our aid, and whose various, hitherto unrelated energies we can coordinate, so that we can change what has heretofore been a dull distasteful effort into a purpose with an attractive and brilliant outlook. We contemplate our work with all the warm responsive enthusiasm we possess, just as the ardent lover pictures in his dreams the young girl whom he loves; with this difference, however, that the creation of such illusions with

the lover are natural, while for us they are deliberately planned, and it takes a long time for them to spring up spontaneously.

If the miser reaches the point of sacrificing his health, his pleasures, and even his very honesty for the love of his money, shall not we succeed in learning to love so noble an aim as intellectual work sufficiently to make us sacrifice our laziness for a few hours every day? Here is a merchant who gets up at five o'clock every morning, and who until nine o'clock in the evening is at the beck and call of his customers, in the hope that he may some day be able to retire and go to the country and enjoy a complete rest. Should not our young people therefore spend at least five hours a day at their work-table in order to assure for themselves, both now and in the future, the manifold joys of intellectual culture? Supposing the task is disagreeable—but if one puts one's heart into it, it never is so—one may be sure by the laws of the association of ideas that habit will make the irksome feeling grow less, and that it will not be long before the work becomes a delight.

In fact, our power to render attractive, by association, what was not so at first stretches out indefinitely. We may cultivate the sentiments favorable to our will to the point where they are wholly transformed. Who would recognize in that delightful sentiment of the mystic, who, to quote the expression of Saint François de Sales, "let his soul mingle and flow into the soul of God," a synthesis of love and that fear of primitive men, who, when thrown naked into the lap of nature, whose power was so incomparably greater than theirs, felt keenly their helplessness and their terror of natural forces? In the same way, it is only by turning to good account this feeling of the shortness of life, "this slipping away of the hours in their imperceptible flight, which frightens us when we think of it, and the endless march of battalions of tiny seconds which wear away the body and the life of men,"[1] that we can derive benefit from it by learning not to be led away by trivial distractions.

We most assuredly can neither stimulate nor create feelings which do not already ex-

[1] Guy de Maupassant, "Fort comme la mort."

ist in consciousness. But I do not believe that any of the elementary feelings are lacking in human consciousness. At any rate, if there are some men who differ so profoundly from their fellows it is not to such we are speaking. We are writing a treatise for normal young people and not a manual of abnormalities. Moreover, such monsters do not exist. Where, for instance, has one ever seen men whose chief characteristic is cruelty, and who never under any circumstance whatsoever felt a sense of pity either for their relatives or for themselves? We say never, because if such emotions were even rarely there, they would never grow less, and it would be possible to increase them. We know, on the other hand, that the most complex and noble feelings are syntheses formed by the intimate association of many elementary feelings.[1] On the other hand, it is evident that vigorous and prolonged attention of the mind upon any conscious state whatever tends to draw it into the full light of consciousness, and consequently to enable it to awaken other associated states, and to be-

[1] Spencer, "Psychology," I. ch. "Sentiments." Translated Ribot. F. Alcan.

come a center of organization. We also maintain (and each one may verify this by his own experience), that we can encourage and strengthen weak, and, as it were, down-trodden emotional states which, hitherto, have been buffeted and mortified and kept under by their more powerful neighbors. They exist unseen, like the stars which shine none the less brightly by day, altho the ignorant do not suspect their presence. Our attention, which we can focus upon any state at will, takes the place of the creative power which we do not possess.

Otherwise how can we explain the success of novels, and furthermore, how is it that everybody understands them? It is because they call forth feelings which in daily life hardly ever have any opportunity to manifest themselves. They are to life like a skirmish or a mimic war in the absence of war in earnest. And if the great majority of the public can follow the romances of great masters, does it not prove that in most of the readers the emotions are merely sleeping, and only waiting for a call to bring them forth into the full light of consciousness?

It would be strange if we, as masters of our attention and imagination, could not do for ourselves what the novelist can do for us. But we can do it. I can, for example, create artificially in myself a feeling of rage or tenderness or enthusiasm; in short, any emotion whose help I need in order to arrive at any desired end.

Do we not see that scientific discoveries have created, in the human sense of the word, wholly new feelings? Is there anything more cut and dried than the Cartesian doctrine of philosophy? Nevertheless, did not this abstract theory, falling in the ardent mind of Spinoza, arrange according to a new system all the sentiments which had hitherto been scattered in his mind, and group them around the powerful feeling which he possest of our non-existence, and from that developed the most admirable and passionate metaphysical romance which we possess? Can one say that the feeling of humanity is innate in man? Is it not a conscious product, a new synthesis of incomparable force? And is it not evident that Mill was right when he wrote: "This feeling of unity with our fellow crea-

tures shall be as deeply rooted in our character, and to our own consciousness as completely a part of our nature, as the horror of crime is in an ordinarily brought up young person.'' [1]

Therefore does it not appear that the rôle of the intelligence is chiefly to bring together and to unite the elementary untrained sentiments into working order, and to give them distinct expression? For by itself every emotional state and every desire is vague, blind and helpless. With the exception of the instinctive feelings of anger and fear, which can find external expression by themselves, the majority require the cooperation of the intelligence. They cause a certain feeling of restlessness and discomfort in the mind, but it is the intelligence which gives the true significance to this feeling of discomfort. It devolves upon the mind to find out ways to satisfy desire. If we were caught in a terrible hurricane on Mont Blanc, suffering with cold, and in terror of a horrible death, it would be our intelligence that would suggest

[1] Stuart Mill, ''Utilitarianism,'' Ch. III. Trans. Le Monnier. F. Alcan.

to us to hollow out a little cave in the snow-bank where we might wait until the danger was over. If, like Robinson Crusoe, we were cast on a desert island, of what use to us would be the longings excited by our misfortune, if our intelligence did not set to work to find some means to satisfy them? If I am in poverty, and wish to escape from it, again it is my intelligence that will point out to me a distinct and definite line of action. If one compares the vague indefinite emotion produced by the sexual tendencies in a young man who is perfectly pure and unsophisticated, with the distinctness and energy with which the desire appears after a first experience, one will understand how powerful the intelligence is in making these emotional states distinct. All that is necessary therefore, to give vigor and life to an emotion or a desire, is to make the object to be obtained perfectly clear in the mind, so that all its attractive, delightful or simply useful aspects may be brought boldly into relief.

We see, therefore, that by the mere fact that we are intelligent and capable of foresight (to know being not exactly the same

thing as to foresee), we can utilize every means in our power, which we have studied, to strengthen the allied feelings; we can bring very little direct influence from without to bear on our effective states, but our power acquires a very great scope by the intelligent application of the laws of association.

We shall see that we can furthermore double this power by placing ourselves in an environment favorable to the development of certain feelings, such as a family circle, or by surrounding ourselves by certain comrades or acquaintances, by choosing our reading and by selecting as examples certain people whom we wish to be like. But we shall take up at greater length elsewhere this study of the indirect method of acting upon ourselves. (Book V).

The preceding arguments are sufficient to give us courage. If an idea needs the heat of an emotional state to weld it to an action, there is no doubt at all that we can produce this heat, whenever we have need of it, not by merely saying that we can do so, but by the rational use of the laws of association.

Thus the supremacy of the intelligence no longer appears impossible.

But we must examine still more closely the relation of the idea to the affections. Feeling is a state that is diffuse, sluggish and slow to arouse, and consequently one can foresee, on *a priori* principles, what experience confirms, viz., that feeling is a comparatively rare state of consciousness. The range between its appearance and disappearance is very wide. The emotions have an ebb and flow. In the intervals the mind enjoys a period of calm and tranquillity, analogous to that of the sea at slack water. This periodic nature of the affective states enables us to lay a very firm foundation for the triumph of rational liberty. It is also the nature of thought to be perpetually coming and going, but a young man who has already been educated, either by the severe discipline of business, or by the instruction of his parents and teachers, has acquired great control over it. He can keep in mind for a very long time any representation which it pleases him to retain. In comparison with the instability of affective states, an idea stands out in sharp contrast

by its duration and persistence. It remains present during the flow of feeling in order to be able to take advantage of the flood, and so that, during its ebb it can turn to active profit its provisorial dictatorship, in order to start works of defense against the enemy and reinforce its own allies.

When feeling surges up into consciousness (we are now only concerned with feelings that are favorable to our purposes), we must seize the occasion to launch our bark. We must take advantage of our good moments as if the voice of God were calling us, to make good resolutions.[1] Whatever may be the accompanying feeling which invades the soul, let us immediately make use of it for our work. Have we heard of the success of a comrade, and has this whipt up our wavering will; if so then let us get quickly to work! Quick, let us courageously clear out of the way the task which has been tormenting us for the last few days, because we were unable to make up our mind to get right at it and attack it, and also unable to get rid of the idea that we ought to do this, so much that

[1] Leibnitz, "New Essays," II., 35.

it has worn upon us like remorse. If to-day, after reading this we feel a sentiment of the dignity and nobility of work, then let us immediately take up our pen! Or more simply, if we experience this feeling of intellectual and physical vigor that makes work pleasant, then let us get right down to our task. These favorable moments must be used in order to form strong habits, and to taste, in such a way as to preserve the flavor, for as long a time as possible, the manly joys of productive and fruitful work, and the pride of self-mastery.

The feeling on ebbing away, will have left a beneficent deposit in the form of a stronger habit of work, the memory of the joys which one has experienced, and of energetic resolutions.

Then when the feeling has disappeared, in the calm which succeeds it, dictatorial power belongs to the idea which alone remains in consciousness. But ideas, as Schopenhauer remarks, are like the dam of the reservoir which, when the springs of morality flow, which they do not always do, succeeds in accumulating good sentiments, and which, when

the occasion comes, lets them be distributed where they are needed by the canals of dispersion.[1] This comes back to the same thing, as we have said, namely, that the union effected between the ideas and actions, under the influence of the feelings, lasts, and on the other hand, the idea, having been associated frequently with a feeling of happiness, is able at last, even in the absence of these actual presentative feelings, to awaken them by the laws of association to a slight degree only, it is true, but nevertheless sufficiently to bring about action.

After having studied the relations of the intelligence to the favorable affective states, it remains for us to study the connection between the intellect and those affective or emotional states which are hostile to the work of mastering self.

We have seen that our direct power over our affective states, desires, and passions is very weak, and in fact hardly appreciable. Our means are only indirect. We have no power over anything excepting our muscles, and the course of our ideas. We can repress

[1] "Fondament de la morale," Fr., trans F. Alcan, p. 125.

external manifestations of emotions and suppress their natural language. The courtezan, and the man of the world, who is often a very timid courtezan, standing in the greatest dread of a most tyrannical and unenlightened power—that is to say, public opinion—both acquire to a very high degree the power of repressing all external expression of their hatred, anger, indignation, or disdain.

On the other hand, desire and tendencies are absolutely apart from the exterior world; they can only satisfy themselves by muscular actions: anger gets satisfaction by inflicting injuries or blows; love by embraces, kisses and caresses. But our muscles depend upon our will, and since we can temporarily refuse to allow our members to serve a passion, it is clear that we can develop our power and finally succeed in concealing our emotion within ourselves.

Since all tendencies or feelings demand, by the law of the conservation of energy, that they shall spend themselves in some way, when a feeling is thus checked from the outside, it is thrown inward and is apt to invade the brain and to provoke a rush of disordered

ideas, which in their turn will arouse associated feelings. It is in this sense that Pascal said: "The greater the mind the greater the passions."

But do not let us forget that the direction of our thoughts lies in our own hands; we can prevent the conflagration from spreading further and further. Sometimes we must even fight on the side of the fire, if we feel that it is impossible to extinguish it, and then, we can let our anger expend itself in words, or in projects of vengeance, feeling sure that we can gain control over ourselves when the dispersion of our wrath through these channels shall have sufficiently appeased the stupid, blind emotion which forces our wills to beat prudent retreats. We allow our adversary to exhaust itself before we begin offensive operations.

Sometimes we can enter into an active engagement. For, we have seen that a tendency which is somewhat complex, because it is blind, has always need of the intellect. It hangs, so to speak, on an idea. It is like the union of the shark, whose sight is weak and whose sense of smell is wanting, with the

pilot-fish, which guides it toward its prey, and without which this monster of the sea would plunge ahead with brute strength, but without discernment.

Now the first effect of all passion and all desire is to pervert the intelligence and make its own wishes appear legitimate. There is no lazy man who has not plenty of good reasons for doing nothing, and who has not a ready answer to offer to any one who wants to stimulate him to work. A despot would be wanting in understanding of his part, if he were not imbued with a sense of his own superiority over those whom he is ruling, and if he had not appreciated the enormous inconvenience that liberty would be to him. A passion legitimized by sophisms becomes formidable. Therefore, it is the idea, or a group of ideas, which act as pilot to the emotional state, that we must closely examine if we wish to diminish the power of the latter.

It is these sophisms which we must pick to pieces and destroy. It is the illusions with which passion surrounds an object that we must dispel. And thus, a distinct vision of falsehood and error, and the consequent dis-

covery of the fallacious promises of the present and of a deceptive future, a glimpse beforehand of unfortunate consequences to our vanity, our health, our happiness and our dignity will arouse in opposition to the desire the necessary considerations to overthrow it, namely, other desires and other emotional states, which were in danger of being crowded out. These latter will hinder the former and, even tho they do not succeed in wholly overcoming them, they will render their victory questionable and uncertain. They will instil feelings of doubt and unrest into the too tranquil mind. In this way one must consciously raise up adversaries against that mental laziness that is content with itself; adversaries, which will become adept in the struggle, and which will finally succeed in leading one on to more and more frequent, and more and more decisive victories. We recall the charming character of *Chérubin* in the "Marriage of Figaro."

"I no longer know who I am," he cries; "for some time past agitation stirs my breast; my heart palpitates at the very sight of a woman; the mere words love, passion,

startle and excite it. In fact, the need of saying to some one 'I love you,' has become so strong and imperative that I say it when I am all alone; while walking in the park; I would say it to your mistress, to you, even to the trees, and to the wind. Yesterday I met Marceline. . . ."

Suzanne, laughing, exclaims at this, "Ah! ah! ah! ah! ah!" To which *Cherubin* replies: "Why not? She is a woman! She is a girl! A woman! ah! how sweet those words are!"

If Cherubin had been capable of controlling himself temporarily, if he had brought himself to look closely at Marceline and to notice how ugly and old and stupid she was, his desire would have been seriously diminished, and that would have killed it. Attentive examination would have led to the truth. Strong passion prevents the awakening of a critical spirit. The moment that voluntary criticism is possible passion is in danger of perishing. The lazy man, even he who is best provided with excellent excuses in the form of sophisms, has moments of enthusiasm at certain times, when the advantages of the

happiness of work over a lazy life appear attractive, and these moments make it impossible henceforward for him to lead a lazy life without twinges of remorse.

What is possible when one sets truth against sophisms is possible in cases which seem even more difficult; that is, when it is a question of trying to overthrow a sophism by veritable voluntary illusions, or, what is still harder, when it is necessary to oppose a truth which, however, is contrary to the work of self-mastery, with a fabrication of useful fictions.

It is clear that a fiction can only influence our conduct when we lend it the support of faith. If it is nothing more than an empty formula, a "psittacism," a parrot-like creed, it will be of no use to us. But here you may stop us and laugh! What! Are we wittingly and deliberately to deceive ourselves and to become voluntary dupes? That is absurd! Yes; absurd in appearance, but perfectly explicable to any one who reflects upon the extraordinary power of enfranchisement which the laws of attention and memory can bestow upon us.

Is it not, in fact, the most general law of memory that all remembrances which are not refreshed from time to time tend to become less distinct and somewhat confused? They grow fainter and fainter until they disappear altogether from common memory.[1] Now, as we are to a very large degree masters of our attention, we can condemn a remembrance to death by merely refusing to consider it again. We can, on the other hand, give it whatever intensity we wish it to have in consciousness by continually bestowing our most vigorous attention upon it. All intellectual workers get to the point of retaining only what they wish to retain. Everything to which they do not return, and to which they give no further thought, disappears absolutely from their minds (except, of course, with a certain few exceptions). Leibnitz thoroughly understood what an influence this law could have upon us when we desire finally to acquire a conviction which we do not possess. "We can," said he, "make ourselves believe what we want to believe by turning our attention away from the

[1] We add this word "common" to avoid raising the question whether anything once stored in memory is ever absolutely lost.

disagreeable side of the question, and fastening it on some other aspect which pleases us; what is accomplished is that, after we have looked at a question in a favorable light for some time, its truth becomes more probable to us." In fact, a conviction must necessarily spring from motives in the mind, but the very act of collecting these motives is to a certain extent the same thing as investigating them.

But we may, if we wish, falsify this inquiry in one of two ways. First, one is free to leave it incomplete, to refuse to glance at certain very important considerations. As every inquiry demands a certain activity of spirit, and as laziness is so natural to us, nothing is easier than to stop too soon. It is twice as easy if we are afraid that we shall encounter certain motives which are displeasing to us. Then, when we have cut the inquiry short in the middle, we are also free to appraise the values of the motives, and to let our desires lay especial stress on those which please us, and to scant the weight of the others. A young man who loves a young girl, and who has quite made up his mind to

marry her, will refuse to listen to any information concerning her family, the condition of their health, or the source of their income. If it is proved that these are not all that they should be, what does it matter to him! Should a young girl be held responsible for the faults of her ancestors? On the other hand, if he is seeking to free himself from certain ties which have become irksome to him, and from promises which in his inexperience he made at a moment when he was overcome by his senses, he will be terribly keen on this question of family responsibility even to the most remote ancestors.

But it is true that our motives can hardly be compared to weights which are always identical in value. Just as one figure placed before another, or before two others, makes the number ten, or one hundred times as much, so a motive takes on different values according to which one of several sentiments it is associated. And as we are to a very large degree the masters of these associations, we can bestow any value or efficacy that we wish to the ideas which we prefer.

Furthermore, we can uphold this mental

construction, or arrangement, by favorable influences from outside; we have not only the present at our command, but through our memory we can use the past, and by skilful employment of the resources of our intelligence can become masters of the future. We are free to choose our reading in such a way as to eliminate books which would be apt to stimulate our sexual tendencies and to predispose us to those vague sentimental day-dreams which are so favorable to laziness. We can above all cut off all companionship, either by a distinct break or by distant coldness, with comrades who, by the tendency of their minds, their character, or their manner of life, would only strengthen any evil tendencies which we might have and lead us into dissipation and various excesses, and who know how to invent plausible excuses for their laziness. We do not all possess a mentor who will throw us into the sea at the critical moment of danger, but there is a very simple way of having nothing to fear on the Isle of Perdition, and that is never to go near it.

Here, then, is a list of all the means with

which we can struggle against the powerful enemies of right. We can refuse to let them express themselves in the language which is natural to them; we can employ clever strategy to undermine the errors and the sophisms on which our desires hang, and even wholly to discredit their baleful truths. We can combine with these means of action an intelligent arrangement of external measures, such as withdrawing from an environment which would keep on inflaming our passions, and thus avoid conditions which would favor their development.

But this collection of tactical procedures constitutes preparation for work rather than work itself. This preparation may be suddenly interrupted by some passion which has developed in spite of our efforts, or which more often has been profiting by our inattention and the somnolence of our will. But when the storm begins to threaten, when sensual feelings, for example, begin to rise into consciousness, it must not be forgotten that ideas are the sources from which such passion derives its nourishment, and that these ideas which passion would like to embrace

for its own purposes we can, at least, attempt to use for our ends. If the struggle is unequal, if the conflagration is gradually gaining headway whatever happens, our "fine pure superior will," that "trenchant blade, sharp point of the sword of the spirit,"[1] must never consent. But as this tide of emotional states does not consist of a single force, nor a solitary burst of feeling, but of many forces at variance with each other, the more powerful masking the opposing and vanquished forces in the tumultuous rush, it is necessary for us to bring all our attention and sympathy to bear upon our weaker allies. Possibly we shall be able to rally them and to reopen a victorious attack upon them, or at least to beat a retreat in good order. At all events we shall be able to regain control of ourselves more easily and rapidly and more completely than otherwise. For example, when a feeling of sensuality overcomes us, we must never for a single moment lose sight of the shame of our defeat; we can call up and perhaps retain in the mind a sort of distinct foretaste of the feeling of depres-

[1] Saint François de Sales: "Introduction à la Vie dévote." Part IV.

sion which will follow the gratification, the loss of a good day of active, productive work. In the same way, when an attack of laziness comes on, such as most workers have, even tho we may not be able to overcome our inertia or to conquer the revolts of the dull "brute" within us, we can recall to mind the delight of work and of the sense of self-mastery. The attack will then assuredly not be so long, and recovery will be easier. It is often even a good plan, for example, to give up the direct struggle and calm the sensual emotion by getting up and going out to take a walk or by going to make a visit; or, in a word, by trying to eliminate the fixt idea by wearing it out, or by disturbing it, or at least by obliging it to share its consciousness with other states which we can introduce artificially. In the same way we can deceive our laziness by reading a book of travel, or by drawing, or by making music; then when the spirit moves again, we must take advantage of its alertness to tempt it to return to the work that was abandoned a little while before by reason of our faint-heartedness or by our slothful feelings.

Finally, even tho our will may have been beaten, which is frequently apt to happen, we must not lose courage. It is enough if, like a swimmer who meets a rapid current, we make ever so little headway. It is even enough to prevent us from losing hope entirely if we are swept along less rapidly than we would have been if we had let ourselves go altogether. Time will accomplish what we want. It is time which forms habits and which gives them the strength and energy of natural tendencies. The power of the man who never despairs is marvelous. In the Alps there are granite gorges over three hundred feet in depth. It is the incessant wearing of the water burdened with sand that through countless summers has worn these prodigious chasms; just so the smallest actions repeated indefinitely achieve in the end results out of all proportion to their causes. It is true that unlike nature, we have not hundreds of centuries at our disposal, but neither do we have to hollow out granite. The only problem that we have is how to make use of bad habits in such a way as gradually to transform them into good ones. Our object is only to confine

our sensuality and laziness within reasonable bounds, without hoping to eradicate them entirely.

Moreover, our very defeats can be turned to good advantage, proving all the more how many resources we have for our self-perfection! For example, the feeling of rancor, that species of bitter disgust, physical fatigue, and intellectual weakness with which sensual gratification leaves us, is an excellent thing to keep constantly before our minds, so as to feel its unpleasantness and to fix its effects firmly in our memory.

A few days of absolute laziness never fail to awaken a feeling of intolerable boredom, accompanied by a disgust with ourselves which is most valuable if we use it for our profit. It is a good thing occasionally to have such experiences in as distinct and conclusive a form as possible, for, by comparison, virtue and work appear what they are in reality, sources of unqualified happiness, and the inspiration of all the nobler and more forceful feelings: the consciousness of one's own strength, pride in being able to feel that one is a well-trained worker, thoroughly prepared

to render important service to his fellows and to his country. In this struggle for freedom, there are certain kinds of defeat that are worth as much as victories.

But it is time to leave these general considerations. We have thus far established the fact that one may unite into a firmly organized system certain volitions and certain series of actions; and inversely that one may break the most firmly established harmful associations. The conclusion that these facts bring us to is, that the education of one's own will by one's self is possible.

It now remains for us to study carefully the manner of forming such associations; that is to say the most efficacious measures by which we can learn to gain control over self.

The best of these measures, and the most efficacious are subjective in their origin and in their method of approaching the subject. These are the purely psychological processes.

The others are what we shall call external or objective processes. They consist of the intelligent employment of resources which any one who thoroughly understands how to make use of the outside world will find at his disposal.

BOOK III

THE INTERNAL MEASURES

These internal means whose efficacy is infallible in creating, strengthening or destroying certain emotional states, and which ought necessarily to be used before the employment of the external measures include: (I) Meditative reflection; (II) Action.

We shall consider in the appendix the subject of bodily hygiene in its relation to the special kind of energy which we have taken as a subject of study; that is to say, to intellectual work.

I

THE PART OF MEDITATIVE REFLECTION IN THE EDUCATION OF THE WILL

We say meditative reflection in order sharply to distinguish this intellectual operation from others which are similar. It goes without saying that we do not mean by these words revery and certainly not that sentimental revery which is, as we have seen, one of the enemies against which we must energetically wage war in this work of self-mastery. While in revery or day-dreams the attention sleeps, allowing a troop of ideas and sentiments to dance lightly in and out of consciousness, permitting the whimsical and unforeseen combinations according to chance associations of ideas, meditative reflection leaves nothing to chance.

Nevertheless, it differs wholly from study which aims to acquire exact knowledge, in that its tendency is not to stock the mind with facts, but to make it glow with creative energy, or as Montaigne has said, "to forge the mind, not furnish it."[1] In study

[1] Montaigne, III, 3.

knowledge is what we pursue; in meditative reflection it is quite otherwise. Our object is to inspire emotions of hatred or love in the soul. In study we are governed by a desire to find out the truth; in meditative reflection the truth is not the thing that most concerns us. We prefer a useful illusion to a harmful truth: our entire resource is dominated exclusively by a motive of utility.

In order to carry on this operation with profit it is necessary thoroughly to understand psychology. Even the slightest details of the science of our nature must be familiar to us.

We must be acquainted with the causes of our intellectual acts and volitions. We must be able to trace the relations which these phenomena bear one to another, and to examine their reciprocal influence, their associations and their combinations. And we must above all know the influences of our physical, intellectual, and moral environment on our psychologic life.

All this requires a strong habit of observation, of very keen and subtle observation, cultivated from the utilitarian point of view.

Therefore, we must again repeat that our task consists in patiently seeking out such motives as are capable of awakening in us outbursts of love or hatred, and of forming certain strong combinations and associations between certain ideas and other ideas, between certain sentiments and other sentiments, and between ideas and sentiments, or else in breaking those associations which we consider to be harmful. It consists in using the laws of attention and memory in order to efface from consciousness or to engrave upon it whatever we consider wise or necessary to efface or to engrave there. We must "distil favorable ideas and sentiments in our soul," and must then transform these abstract ideas into warm, living, affective feelings. Meditative reflection alone attains its end when it is able to provoke powerful affective movements or strong repulsions. While study leads to knowledge, meditative reflection should lead to action.

If we bear in mind that action is the whole expression of man, that his worth depends upon what he does, and if on the other hand we remember that our actions are almost

wholly, if not altogether, provoked by the affective states, we shall understand at once the great importance of carefully studying the delicate mechanism by which the affective states favorable to our ends may be developed and increased.

In chemistry we learn that if one plunges a crystal into a solution in which several substances are held in saturation, the molecules of the same nature as the crystal, drawn together from the depths of the solution by some mysterious attraction, will begin to group themselves slowly around it. The crystal grows little by little, and if it is kept perfectly quiet for weeks or months, it will form those wonderful crystals whose size and beauty are the joy and pride of the laboratory. But if the solution be constantly jarred or disturbed, the deposit will be formed irregularly, the crystal will be imperfect and will remain small. The same thing is true in psychology. If one keeps any psychological state whatever in a foreground of consciousness it will insensibly, by an affinity no less mysterious than the other, gradually attract to itself other intellectual and affec-

tive states of the same nature. If this condition is kept up for a long time, it will gather around it an organized group of forces of considerable power, and will acquire a decisive and almost absolute control in consciousness, silencing every other idea that is opposed to it. If this "crystallization" goes on slowly without disturbance or interruption it will acquire a remarkably strong character. The group of feelings thus formed will be sharply defined, powerful and calm. And, here we may note that there is perhaps no idea which can not if we so wish, create within us such a group or "clan" of associated ideas. Religious ideas, maternal feeling, and even such low, despicable sentiments as love of money for its own sake, may rise up in us and gain this powerful ascendency.

But few are the men and still fewer are the young men who possess the calmness necessary to carry on this work of slow "crystallization." For the student, life is too easy and too full of variety, especially in Paris or any other large city. A host of excitements of every kind come from without

knocking at the door of one's consciousness. One idea follows another, and then comes still another; every feeling is followed by twenty or thirty other different feelings that join in a mad race after it. Add to this invasion the thousands of sensations which assail the senses; add the interests of the town, the newspapers and conversation and you can only compare the course of such ideas through consciousness of the tumultuous rush of a torrent which dashes wildly with a deafening roar against the rocks which lie in its channel.

Those who have stood aside for a moment to reflect, and who look beyond the present moment and try to catch a glimpse of the future, are very few. It is so easy to throw one's mind open to the visits of these unrelated impressions! It requires so little effort! One has only to shake off care and let one's self go! As Channing has remarked, "the majority of men know as little of themselves as they do of the countries in Central Africa."[1] They never voluntarily turn their attention from the outside world to examine

[1] "On Personal Education."

themselves: or rather, as they have thrown their consciousness wide open to everything outside, they have never had the courage to fathom this torrent of outside interests and ascertain the actual rock-bottom depth of their own beings. The result is that they go through life drawn hither and thither by outside happenings, with scarcely any originality, or without any more control of their direction than have the leaves which are whirled about by the autumn wind. They draw no profit from their experiences; for to let one's interest wander in every direction is equivalent to having no real interest in anything. Only those draw a profit from their experiences who plunge into the torrent of their impressions without being carried away by them and who are sufficiently cool and self-possessed to snatch the different circumstances, ideas and feelings which they choose to possess, as they pass by, and which they will later ponder over, study and assimilate.

Once we are clearly conscious of the end we have in view, which is to strengthen our will, and particularly our will to work, we

must learn constantly to choose which of all the external circumstances, impressions, ideas and sentiments, we consider sufficiently favorable to our work, to be received and retained until they have made their impression upon us, and to let those that are unfavorable flow by without paying any attention to them. The secret of success is to profit by everything that we can use for our own ends.

The preceding studies clearly indicate that our work must be done along the following psychological lines:

1. When a favorable sentiment passes through consciousness we must prevent it from disappearing too quickly; we must fix the attention on it and make it waken all the ideas and sentiments which it can arouse. In other words, cause it to become as prolific as possible and to yield everything it has to give.

2. When we lack a certain sentiment altogether, or when we can not arouse it within us, we must find out which idea or group of ideas has an affinity for it, and fix our attention on these ideas and keep them clearly in consciousness and wait until, by the natural

play of association, the sentiment is called forth.

3. When a sentiment that is unfavorable to our work intrudes itself into our consciousness, we must refuse to pay any attention to it, and endeavor, not even to think about it, and to let it, as it were, perish of inanition.

4. When an unfavorable sentiment has sprung up and has gained our attention without our being able to thrust it out, we must bring every unfavorable criticism to bear upon all the ideas upon which the sentiment hangs and even upon the object of the sentiment as well.

5. We must look sharply and closely at all external circumstances of life, examining even most minute details in such a way that we may intelligently use all the resources and avoid all the dangers that they present.

This, so to speak, is the general program which we must try to follow.

But there are several points upon which we must insist. When the student has grasped the idea of the importance of not "fleeing from himself," when he perceives

that distraction is just as much a sign of weakness as a trembling in the limbs, he will learn to find time for concentration of thought, he will cease to dissipate his mental energy as his companions do. He will not read ten newspapers an afternoon, nor waste his time in playing cards, nor excitedly discussing trifles till his brain whirls with so many interests. He will make it a point of honor to be master of himself and he will not allow himself to be swept helplessly along by the current that carries the others down the stream.

The most efficacious way of attaining this mastery of self is to arouse vigorous likes or vehement dislikes in the soul. He must therefore try to keep in mind certain reflections which will help him to make himself love work and detest an easy, useless, stupid, idle life. His own experience will furnish him plenty of such reflections at any moment. He must not let them be hurried immediately out of his mind by other ideas. He must make a determined effort to realize them. He must insist upon developing them as fully as possible. Instead of thinking with words as

the majority of people do, he must be able to see distinctly and in detail what it is that he is reflecting upon. To see a thing in general, as one who runs, is the method of lazy minds. Reflective minds, on the contrary, distil their thoughts drop by drop and "make honey" out of the different points of their meditations.

Each one knows, for example, and says that work brings many kind of joys, among which are the following: First, there are the intense satisfaction of self-esteem, the very joy of feeling one's own faculties grow strong and keen, that of showering happiness upon one's relatives, and of preparing one's self for a happy old age. But our student must not content himself with a purely verbal enumeration of these joys. Words are short, easy signs which take the place in thought of the more complex things themselves, which are hard to express and which require a greater effort of the imagination in proportion as the details are more numerous. Thus lazy people think abstract, inanimate ideas in words, with the result, that what they retain for their spiritual life

amounts to nothing. Moreover, words follow one another so quickly and call up such a multitude of pictures that none of them achieve any distinctness. As a result, these superficial evocations merely fatigue the mind uselessly. A sort of stupefaction is produced by this jumble of images which comes to nothing. The remedy for this evil is to see things clearly and in great detail. For example do not say: "My parents will be pleased!" but call up a picture of your father, imagine that you are seeing the manifestation of his joy at each of your successes, picture him receiving the congratulations of his friends and his family. Try to imagine your mother's pride, and her pleasure during the vacation when she strolls up and down on the arm of the son of whom she is so proud; imagine yourself invisibly present at the evening meal where they are talking of you. Perhaps you will even gain a stimulating idea from the charming vanity of the little sister who is so proud of her big brother. In other words try, by picturing to yourself the very details and gestures and words they will use, to taste all the sweet-

ness there is in being loved by those who are willingly and gladly making great sacrifices and depriving themselves of many comforts in order to make your youth more happy, and who are bearing the burden of existence for you so as to leave your young shoulders free.

In the same way you must paint a picture complete in every trifling detail of old age crowning a life of work—the authority of your sayings and writings, the respect that everybody shows you, the great interest that remains in life even when it is deprived of many pleasures. Then again you must taste to the full and, as it were, roll under your tongue, the sweets of independence which work brings, the feeling of force and power which it develops, the innumerable happinesses that it brings to the energetic, and the joys which it renders doubly dear.

After one has often meditated along such lines and others of a like nature; when one has let thought become impregnated, as it were, with their perfume, it is impossible not to have one's will stimulated by a strong but quiet enthusiasm. But we must lay stress

upon this point again; when an ardent emotion makes itself felt it must have plenty of scope to expend its energy. Even, altho it may be a case of a feeling which has suddenly entered the consciousness from some outside event, as, for instance, in a celebration in honor of some famous man, one should immediately appropriate the feeling of enthusiasm for one's own and set to work to develop and strengthen it.

It is unnecessary to add that, when these considerations are of such a nature as to give us an aversion for the life which we are trying to avoid, we must in the same way form as clear and detailed an idea of them as possible. We must dwell in great detail upon the horrors of a lazy life. One of the ancient's remarks that we do not notice a grain of pepper if we swallow it, but if we chew it, and turn it over and over with the tongue, it will sting the palate with its sharp biting flavor, and make one sneeze and weep. One must figuratively do the same thing concerning laziness and sensuality, so that we may provoke in ourselves a feeling of disgust and shame. The disgust should not be

applied to the evil only, but to all "on which it depends and which depends on it." One must not be like the gourmand to whom his physicians forbade melon, which, every time he ate it brought on a serious relapse. He did not eat it because the doctors told him he would die if he did so, but he repined and lamented over his deprivation, and talked about it to every one; he wanted at least to smell melons, and he thought those people who could eat them altogether too fortunate.[1] In the same way, one must not only despise a life of idleness, that miserable state in which the empty, unoccupied mind preys upon itself and in turn becomes the prey of mean, contemptible thoughts, but one must go still further and abstain from envying a life of idle ease, or even talking about it. We must shun companions who would incline us to a desultory do-nothing existence, and such pleasures as would lead to it. In short, we must not only detest the disease, but the melon which brings on the attacks.

As we have already seen, the great secret in fortifying any sentiment whatsoever is

[1] Saint François de Sales: "Introduction à la Vie dévote."

continually to summon into consciousness, and to keep there as long as possible all the ideas on which it hangs, and to bring these ideas into relief and give them very great vigor and precision. It is of the greatest value actually to see a thing in every characteristic detail. Futhermore, this method enables the sentiment to develop by the very attraction which it exerts over similar sentiments and by the richness of the meditation which they together inspire. In order to help this work along, it is a very good idea to plan one's readings with the definite purpose of cultivating some particular sentiment. The examples which we shall develop in the practical part of the book will perhaps be helpful to those who have never been in the habit of reflecting in this way. The books which set forth the joys of study and the barrenness of an idle life will be of great value in this direction. The reading of memoirs, such as those of Mill and letters like those of Darwin, may also be of use.

If meditation has been carried on successfully; if one has managed to arrange to have perfect calm within and without, and to have

that silence which allows emotional movements to work until they have stirred the very depths of consciousness, one will surely arrive at the point of forming a resolution. But even if no resolution is attained, it must not be imagined that such efforts have not helped us to advance. As Mill has remarked, "His aspirations and powers when he is in this exceptional state become the type with which he compares and by which he estimates his sentiments and proceedings at other times; and his habitual purposes assume a character molded by and assimilated to the moments of lofty sentiment, altho these, from the psychical nature of a human being can only be transient."[1] In fact, we are very much like those instruments which, they say, improve under the touch of a great artist. When we have steadfastly for a long time meditated upon life as a whole, it is impossible for the present moment not to have a very different significance from what it has when we live from day to day, and when we have once lived through in imagination the joys which work gives, and suffered the bitter-

[1] Mill, "Subjection of Women."

ness of a life of weakness and inertia. There is no possible question but that our thought and activity have received a vigorous and energetic impulse. Unfortunately, if we do not return frequently to our rough outline plan, to complete the sketch and strengthen its ideas, the flood of outside interests sweeping afresh through consciousness will soon efface everything. We can never reap a harvest of actions from good impulses unless we repeat them frequently.

It is most important, therefore, at such times not to be readily influenced by a mass of outside impressions. One must learn to concentrate one's thoughts and allow time for the wave of enthusiasm for work and the feelings of repulsion against laziness to accomplish their end, which is to lead the mind to make strong resolutions.

An active, distinctly formulated resolution is in this task of self-regeneration an absolute necessity. One may, for convenience, classify resolutions into two groups, both produced by meditation. There are the broad generalized resolutions which take in our entire existence, and which give a definite direction to

life toward one goal. These resolutions generally occur after a long period of hesitation between two possible walks in life. More often still they are the result of severe struggle, and mark the moment of enthusiasm in which a strong mind definitely determines to resist the suggestions and entreaties of his family, or relations, or friends who are interested in worldly affairs; and not to pay any attention to those arguments which tend to switch the life of a young man onto the main thoroughfare frequented by the majority.

For weak and sheeplike natures, resolutions are nothing more than the shame-faced cowardly peace of the vanquished. They represent the triumph of mediocrity in them, the definite abandonment of every effort of resistance, the acceptance of the life that everybody leads and a still further refusal to listen to the entreaties of a higher ideal than that which suits the mediocre quality of their minds. Between these two wholly distinct positions which lead on to irrevocable conclusions, one finds every degree of weakness in young people who are trying to get hold

of themselves, and who can not succeed in ignoring the call of the higher life, but who, from lack of will are constantly sliding back into the life which they despise. They are like embittered revolting slaves who can not reconcile themselves to accept their bondage as those did who went before them. They perceive the beauty of a useful life, and yet they can not make themselves work; they suffer from the barrenness of a life of idleness, and yet continue to do nothing. But such men can be freed from their slavery by a knowledge of the laws of psychology if, only, they do not despair of their release too soon, and if they will but accept the fact that it can not be accomplished immediately.

If such resolutions have any value it lies in the fact that to a certain extent they may be regarded as a conclusion. They are the expression in a short precise formula of a great number of slight inclinations, experiences, reflections, readings, sentiments, and tendencies.

For example, we must choose for our main line of conduct between two great hypotheses which deal with the general ob-

ject of the universe. We may either hold with the skeptics, that the world as it now exists is in some way the result of a happy stroke of the gods which will never happen again, that life and consciousness only appeared upon this globe by chance, or else we must accept the opposite theory and believe that the universe is undergoing a process of evolution toward a higher and higher state of perfection.

The skeptical hypothesis has only this single argument: we can know nothing; we are shut off in this corner of the universe, in this exiled bit of space. It would be the greatest presumption to formulate the nothing which we know into universal laws. The opposing theory has the advantage of being based on facts and in a certain way on possession. We only know our own world; but it is a well-ordered world and has been so for a long time, for the presence of life presupposes the invariable stability of the laws of nature. If to-day, for example, wheat, along with its visible characteristics, possest certain edible qualities which to-morrow were wholly different and the next day poisonous, no life

could be organized. I perceive, therefore, that since the laws of nature are constant, and as life dates back to the Silurian period, the laws of nature must have been what they now are for several million years. This is what we refer to when we say that the "moral theory" has the right of possession.

On the other hand, this lengthy evolution, which has lasted for so many thousands of years, has produced thinking beings, and the thinking beings have produced moral beings. How, then, can we admit that the march of events does not tend toward thought and morality? Natural history and human history both teach that the struggle for existence with all its horrors has nevertheless achieved the formation of a higher form of humanity. Furthermore, thought, like life, implies order and constancy. Chaos is unthinkable. To think means to organize and to classify. Are not thought and consciousness, therefore, the only realities which we know? To accept the skeptical theory amounts to the same thing as to proclaim that the only known reality is a chimera. Such a proclamation can mean nothing to us. It is a

mere verbal utterance that has nothing to support it.

Theoretically, then, the arguments in favor of the moral theory are very strong. Practically, they are decisive. The outcome of the skeptical theory is a justification of personal selfishness and a refusal to recognize the value of anything but utility. If virtue deserves praise, it is only by reason of its superior usefulness.

We may add to these considerations the fact that choice is not optional; it is obligatory—for not to choose is, after all, the same as choosing. To accept a life of idleness and pleasure is practically the same thing as to accept the hypothesis that human life has no value except as an instrument of pleasure. Which theory in its simplicity and naïveté is in the highest degree unmetaphysical. Many people have much more of the metaphysician in them than they think: they merely do not know that they have such powers. That is all.

It is impossible, therefore, not to choose between these two great metaphysical hypotheses. The choice may, perhaps, not take place until after some years of study and

reflection. Then all at once, without warning, some particular argument will suddenly stand out in sharper relief than the rest, and the grandeur and the beauty of the moral theory will suddenly dawn upon the soul, and the resolution will be made. Such a resolution can only come when one accepts the moral theory, because it alone furnishes a reason for our existence, and explains our efforts to do right, and our struggles against injustice and immorality. Once the choice is made skeptical arguments can not for a moment enter the mind; for one thrusts them out with disdain because there is a higher aim than mere pleasure for the philosopher; namely, the desire to act and act honestly. Moral faith henceforward becomes a jealously guarded principle of life and gives freshness and sublimity to existence which is wholly unknown to the dilettante, who can not call forth strong emotions and transform his thoughts into virile activity.

Life takes a definite direction after this solemn resolution has been made. Our actions cease to be upset or diverted by every trifling outside happening. We are no longer

merely obedient tools in the hands of men more energetic than ourselves. Even when we are buffeted by storms, we know how to keep upon our way. We are ripe for nobler endeavors. Such a resolution is like the die to the coin. Long use may efface some of the traits, but one can not help recognizing the strong lines of the design stamped upon the metal.

A great moral resolution of this nature must be accompanied by still another resolution in one's heart. Like Hercules, tormented between vice and virtue, one must resolutely make up one's mind to accept a life of work and reject a life of indolence.

Enough has been said concerning these general resolutions which one seldom makes more than once in a lifetime. These solemn resolutions are the acceptation of an ideal and the affirmation of some great truth which has been borne in upon us.

But we do not attain the goal at a single leap; we can attain it only by *willing* the means to do so. Thoughtful inquiry and study will show us the best means to adopt. Naturally we must will to learn how to attain the

end, for all volition implies resolution. But we will find that these particular resolutions become singularly easy when the great resolution has been carefully and thoughtfully taken. They flow from it as corollaries flow from a theorem. Supposing we have taken a resolution which involves a translation of Aristotle, it is always possible for us to concentrate our thoughts particularly on those things which will incline us toward such a task; if the text in itself is nonsense it can not be denied that the effort of reading into a page a meaning which it never possest is a vigorous mental gymnastic. The mental astuteness developed by the hand-to-hand struggle with every word and sentence, and by the effort to discover a logical sequence, will make itself felt, if after a week of such work one's sharpened wits are applied to a page of Descartes' Meditations or a chapter of Stuart Mill.

The ease with which one can then grasp such studies will make one feel like those Roman soldiers who were required to perform their drill bearing a burden twice as great as that required in time of war. If the

main underlying resolution is always present, it will nearly always be found when it comes to any particular resolution, that simple, familiar, definite considerations are sufficient to arouse the will to action.

From this discussion we can see how much greater success lecturers and professors might have in teaching, if at the beginning of each new line of work they would give a little exposition and set forth in a persuasive way the general and particular advantages that the scholars would derive from these studies. I can say for myself that I studied Latin for years with the greatest aversion because no one had pointed out its usefulness to me: on the other hand, I have cured many pupils of this dislike which they already had by making them read and then by discussing with them the charming exposition of Mr. Fouillée on the importance of classical studies.

An objection of some kind will no doubt still persist in the minds of some of our readers. They have frequently heard it said that prolonged meditation and practical activity never go hand in hand, and that

thinkers are as a rule badly equipped for practical life, and fail to appreciate the value that prolonged meditative reflection has upon action. This is because they confuse men who are merely busy with men of action who are truly worthy of the name. The restlessly busy man is quite the opposite of the man of action. He needs to be always bustling about: his activity expresses itself by actions which frequently have no relation to each other from day to day. But as success in life, in politics, etc., is only obtained by the steady continuation of efforts in the same direction, this fluttering, buzzing restlessness, tho it makes a great deal of noise, accomplishes little or nothing in the way of good honest work. All well-directed activity by any man who is sure of himself implies profound meditation. Great men of action like Henry IV and Napoleon spent hours in reflection either alone or with their ministers before deciding to adopt a definite course.—(Sully). He who does not meditate, who does not always keep in mind the main object to be pursued, who does not carefully think out the best way to take each step in his progress,

must necessarily become the sport of circumstances. Any unforeseen emergency will disturb him, and as these arise he constantly strikes out blindly to repel them, with the result that he finally loses his perspective altogether. Action, therefore, must accompany reflective meditation: otherwise the latter will have no value, altho it is the necessary condition of all active productive life.

We say a necessary condition, because none of us know ourselves as well as we think we do. There is good reason for discouragement when it is remembered that there is hardly one man in a thousand who has real personality. Nearly all men in their general conduct, as well as in their particular actions, are like marionettes drawn together by a combination of forces which are infinitely more powerful than their own. They no more live an individual life than does a piece of wood which is tossed into the torrent, and which is carried away without knowing either how or why. To use a well-known illustration, they are like weather-cocks, twirled hither and thither, conscious of their movements but not conscious of the wind that

moves them. Education, the powerful suggestions of language, the extremely strong pressure which public opinion brings to bear as well as the opinion of one's comrades, the sententious maxims of the worldly and finally our own natural tendencies, guide the majority of us, and those minds are rare indeed, which, in spite of the unsuspected currents that are always carrying them out of their course, nevertheless resolutely pursue their onward progress toward the port which they have chosen in advance, and who are wise enough to stop frequently to take their bearings and correct their course.

Even for those who are brave enough to undertake their own regeneration, the time which they have at their command is really very short! Until, perhaps, the age of twenty-seven one goes along without thinking very much about one's destiny, and by the time one begins to desire to have some plan of life, one finds one's self involved in the machinery which carries one along with it. Sleep alone takes a third of existence; and regular duties, such as dressing, eating, and digestion, the demands of society, the discharge of

one's business or profession, as well as misfortunes and illness leave very little time for the higher life! One goes on and on; one day follows another, and one is old before one begins to see clearly the reason for existence. That wonderful power, the Catholic Church, which knows where she is leading her people and which, by her confessional and her methods of directing souls along the lines of the most profound truths of practical psychology, has built a broad road for this great troop of marionettes. She upholds the feeble who walk unsteadily, and pushes along in the same general direction this multitude which without her would degenerate or would remain, from the moral point of view, on the same level as animals.

It is indeed incredible how readily almost every one is influenced by outside suggestion. First of all comes family education, but families of philosophers are rare! Rare in consequence are the children who receive a rational education. Even those who are favored with such an education live in an atmosphere of stupidity. The people around him, the servants and friends who are

wholly influenced by public opinion, stuff the child's mind with the formulas current in society. Even if the family could raise barriers high enough to keep out these prejudices, the child would have some teachers with very little power of reflection, and companions who shared the spirit of the world. Furthermore, living among his fellows, even the well-brought-up child will speak the language of his companions; but language has its origin in the people, the multitude has created it in its own image. It has poured into it its mediocrity, its hatred for everything that is superior, its stupid childish judgment which never goes beyond experiences. Language also contains a vast number of associated ideas eulogizing wealth and power, and feats of war, and casting contempt on goodness and disinterestedness, and on a simple life and intellectual work. We are all remarkably submissive to these pernicious suggestions. Do you want a proof of it in yourself? Let some one say the word "grandeur," and it is a hundred to one that the word will call up ideas of sovereignty and pomp before it makes you

think of moral grandeur. Every one will think of Cæsar and none of Epictetus. Is good fortune the topic? Then ideas of work and power and applause will spring into the mind! Test, as I have done, a dozen characteristic words which express the ideas that make life worth living to a thinker; make it clearly understood that you are interested, from a psychological point of view, in finding out what images are created in the mind by these words, so that there will be no doubt concerning the bearing of the exercise and you will be edified. You will come to the conclusion that language is the most powerful instrument of suggestion which stupid, vulgar ignorance can wield to check the progress of noble minds.

Naturally every comrade of our student holds a bunch of bonds on this bank of universal stupidity, which he will convert for himself into ready money as fast as he has need of them for his daily expenses. Proverbs and maxims contain in a pithy and witty form the sage sayings of nations; that is to say, the observations of people who did not know even the elementary rules of careful ob-

servation, and who had not the slightest idea of what constitutes a convincing observation. These proverbs, repeated incessantly, finally acquire an authority which it is bad form to dispute. If one is speaking of a young man who is stupidly sacrificing pleasures which are truly worthy of the name to the vanity of making the rounds of the restaurants with a capricious woman of the town, some important personage who wishes to appear broad in his ideas will say: "Well, youth must have its fling." Sometimes he will even encourage the young man to continue by expressing his deep regrets that the time for such follies is passed by for him.

Well! Some one must have the courage to say it. These old saws and long-established sayings do more harm to a young man than can possibly be exprest, for they keep him from reflecting and from seeing the truth. And as in all European countries, as well as in America, when a boy leaves school or college he is thrown into the life of some large town without any real supervision or moral guidance, and as he has never been warned against this fatal atmosphere of

foolish prejudice which every student must breathe, his inconsequential and disastrous line of conduct is explained. These bands of rollicking students are the living embodiment of all these uncriticized, undigested ideas with which the minds of "men of education" are encumbered.

The power of suggestion is so strong that those who manage to free themselves from it in advanced life are to be envied. The weakness of the will aided and abetted by the force of the lower tendencies strengthens the temptation for men to use these proverbs as a legitimate excuse for their spoiled youth and their age ripened years which are but a continuation of that youth. The errors accumulated in the course of education, example, language, and environment, and favored by one's inclination befog the mind and distort one's view of things. There is but one way of dispelling this fog, and that is frequently to withdraw from the crowd in meditative solitude, to dwell upon the suggestions of some lofty mind instead of on the mediocre suggestions of one's surroundings, letting the calm of such beneficent in-

fluence penetrate to the very depth of the soul. The solitude that is favorable to such penetration is of easy attainment to the student. Never again will he find such complete liberty, and it is truly sad that at the very period when one is entirely independent one is so little master of one's self.

There is nothing finer than that by thus retreating within ourselves, we can either by ourselves or by calling great thoughts to our aid, gradually dispel our illusions. Instead of judging things according to the standard which others have set up we must accustom ourselves to look at them by themselves alone; we must, above all, break the habit of judging our pleasures and impressions by public opinion. We shall see how the vulgar who are content with low pleasures by reason of their incapacity to enjoy those of a higher nature not only glorify their deceptive illusions and bestow the most eulogistic words of the language upon them, but how they also point the finger of scorn and disdain at all higher pleasures, and how they stigmatize everything that is worthy of esteem. A philosopher who reflects and who

does not follow the stream is a dreamer, a little queer or crazy. A man who meditates is a seeker after ethereal abstractions who is apt to stumble into a ditch while observing the stars. All the epithets of praise and all the tripping dactyls are for vice, while the ponderous spondees are for virtue. The one is as light and graceful as the other is austere, rigid, and pedantic. Molière himself with all his genius was not able to make us laugh at vice. Célimène, the heartless coquette who has not a trace of kindness or sincerity in her nature, is not pictured as ridiculous. It is the honest man whose every word and gesture indicates the greatest propriety and uprightness; it is Alceste, who is chosen to be laughed at, and it is with the greatest astonishment that pupils of both sexes learn that Alceste is really a very fine young man, for the word "virtue" carries along with it so many suggestions that are included in it in popular parlance, that it has come to stand for everything that is common and ordinary. Max Müller computed the number of words used by a cultivated Englishman at three or four thousand, and the

words employed by the great masters of literature at fifteen or twenty thousand. It is in the list of words which are only rarely used in conversation and which form the difference between the equipment of a man of the world and that of a thinker, that one will find those which express ideas which are great and lofty and sublime. Unfortunately there are summits in the language which have been raised by thought just as there are peaks in the mountains, and the vulgar may make short excursions to those summits altho they dwell in the plains. This is why the natural tendency of ideas is away from the sublime. "From our childhood we have heard certain things spoken of as desirable and others as ills. Those who have talked with us have imprest the idea of their point of view upon us, and we are accustomed to regard ideas in the same way as they do and to connect the same emotions and the same passions with them."[1] "One no longer judges them except at the value which they have in the opinion of other men."

It is in attentive reflection that the student

[1] Nicole, "Danger des entretiens."

will find the remedy and will learn how to see things for himself. Let him throw himself into life as all the others do; he must do it, otherwise he would have no experience and would not know how to avoid danger. But after he has experienced the life of the community, he should withdraw into himself and carefully analyze his impressions: he will henceforward cease to be deceived concerning the value and grandeur of certain ideas, and above all on the relations of these things to himself. He will eliminate all that is of foreign importation. He will very soon have drawn his own conclusions concerning the life of the average student and will sum it up as follows: viz., that it sacrifices as a rule lasting pleasures and calm and lofty joys to vanity; the vanity of appearing free, of filling the barrooms with a noisy racket, of drinking like a sot, of coming home at two o'clock in the morning and making night hideous and of making himself notorious in the company of persons whom he will see to-morrow with another set of fellows who are no less drunk than he.

After the repression of boarding-school

and the anxious oversight of parents, it is clear that such conduct strikingly manifests an outburst of independence. But what good is it to show it? The real feeling of independence itself is the great joy. The rest is only vanity. Such a riotous life shows a wholly false appreciation of what real happiness is. As for one's vanity it is so easy to satisfy it in an intelligent manner! How far the joy of being appreciated by one's professors, of passing excellent examinations, of gratifying the desires of one's parents and of being considered a great man in one's own little town, surpasses the empty satisfaction of the student who gives himself up to pleasure, a satisfaction within reach of the drunken street porter or most insignificant clerk on pay-day!

Let the student therefore withdraw into himself and critically examine these pleasures, which are after all nothing but weariness, exhaustion and mortification, disguised by an illusion of vanity. Let him dissect one by one the prejudices and sophisms that swarm around intellectual work. Let him open his eyes wide and examine closely and in minute

detail any one of his days and the principles which regulate it. Let him strengthen further these reflections by reading well-chosen books. Let him push aside everything that does not in some way contribute strength to his will. He will then discover a new world. He will no longer be condemned like the prisoners chained in Plato's cavern to see only the shadow of things. He will see face to face the pure light of truth. He will thus create for himself an atmosphere of sound, manly impressions; he will be a personality, an intelligence possest of self-mastery. He will not be torn in opposite directions by impulses coming from any course whatever, whether from blind tendencies or from the power of language, or from his comrades or from the world at large, or from his environment.

It is also true that one may take refuge in the most profound solitude and live a life of thought even tho surrounded by the world. The solitude which we mean consists in refusing admittance to narrow-minded preoccupations and of constraining one's self to welcome only such ideas and considerations as are capable of arousing in the soul the feel-

ings which we wish to experience. This work does not require that we should make a retreat to the "Grande-Chartreuse"; and it is, moreover, perfectly compatible with one's daily occupations. It is enough if we know how to seize the opportunity to retire into our "inner sanctuary," either while taking a walk or while in one's own home, and for a greater or less time each day or each week to bring the attention to bear upon the motives which are able to arouse feelings of repulsion or love.

Not only will our young man escape from the bondage of vulgar suggestions and errors provoked by passion; not only will his conduct be more nobly molded on truth, but he will escape great dangers. To be master of one's self implies, as a matter of course, repeated conquests by self over the thousand suggestions of the outside world, but it still further and more especially implies the domination of the intelligence over the blind forces of sensibility. If one watches closely the conduct of children and of most women, as well as the great majority of men, one is struck by their tendency to act according to

their first impulses, and by their very evident inability to adapt their conduct to any end, which is ever so little removed from their immediate vision. One emotion or another is always uppermost in their minds and drives them to accomplish such or such an act. A wave of vanity follows a wave of anger, or a burst of affection, etc.; and, after counting out habitual or obligatory actions, the one thing that remains, especially in society, is the imperative desire to create a good impression upon people whose criterion is, as a rule anything but exacting. And as nearly every one possesses the naïve conceit which considers himself as a standard of the best, the public does not look upon any one as a man of action unless he is one of those busy hustling people who can never stay still in one place. Any one who chooses to wrap himself in solitude to meditate and think incurs blame. Nevertheless, all the great and lasting work of the world has been brought forth by meditative and thinking men. The fruitful work of humanity has been accomplished tranquilly, without haste and without fuss, by these very dreamers of whom we have been

speaking and who are accused of "falling into ditches while observing the stars." The others, the noisy blustering fellows, the political men and conquerors, those "hustlers" who have burdened history with their foolishness have only, looking at them through the perspective of time, played a mediocre rôle in the march of humanity. When history, such as we now understand it, and which is scarcely more than a collection of anecdotes destined to satisfy the rather foolish curiosity of the lettered public, will have given place to history written by thinking men and for thinking men, one will be astonished to see how little the deeds of the "great agitators" have altered the main current of civilization. The true heroes of history, who are the great leaders in the sciences, arts, literature, philosophy and industry, will be placed where they deserve to be, in the first ranks. A poor philosopher like Ampére who was never able to make money, and whose vagaries made his concierge laugh until she wept, has done more by his discoveries to revolutionize society, and even modern war, than a Bismarck and a Moltke combined. Pasteur and Du-

claux have accomplished more to forward the cultivation of earth than fifty ministers of agriculture put together.

How can you expect the student to withstand the general opinion which makes so much of this mere restlessness which it confuses with productive activity? How can you expect him not to consider it necessary to lend himself at least to the illusion of life, and rush around and make a commotion and to do rash deeds since that is life according to the accepted formula! Many of our troubles come from this fatal need, a feeling that we must do something at once. A need that is stimulated by the laudatory tone of public opinion. This restless energy in itself offers no great problem in solitude, except to know how to spend it. But through the tendency to act without consideration, the student is at the mercy of external circumstances. The arrival of a friend during a study-hour, a public reunion, a celebration, any event whatsoever leads him away. For, as it has been aptly said, the unforeseen "unhorses" feeble wills. The only safeguard against such interruption is offered by meditative reflection;

the ability to foresee events which are likely to happen may even make up for a lack of energy. The student can eliminate the unexpected from his life. He can easily forestall the evenings of dissipation in which he will probably be invited to join. He knows, for example, that a certain comrade will be apt to try to take him off either to the restaurants or for a walk; he can readily prepare his form of refusal in advance; or if a refusal pure and simple seems unadvisable to him, he can prepare an excuse and cut his friend's insistence short.[1] But, still again, if he has not firmly made up his mind beforehand that he will go to his room and do a certain definite piece of work, and if he has

[1] We do not approve at all of Kant's ultra point of view on this question. What! I may be permitted to kill a man if I must do so in self-defense, but I am not to be allowed even an evasion in a similar case of legitimate self-defense against an inconsiderate acquaintance? It is more than a right—it is a duty to defend one's work and thought against such people. The polite excuse is often the only weapon that one can use to protect one's self without seriously offending others. The odious and unpardonable excuse is the excuse which hurts. A truth uttered with the intention of hurting is quite as bad as a quibble. It is the malicious intention which makes the deed blameworthy.

not prepared the formula which will cut short all possible attempts to entice him to do nothing, he stands a very great chance of losing his day. To foresee, from the psychological point of view, is to conjure up in imagination events which may take place. If this prevision is vivid and distinct, it puts the mind in a state of semi-tension so that the reply or action takes place very quickly, so quickly that between the thought of the act, or the reply, and their objective realization, there is not sufficient time for the consideration of any outside event or the entreaties of one's comrades to come in between. Events which are hostile to our decision only give rise to the automatic performance of actions that conform to the decision.

It is only the weak who find life full of unexpected problems. To any one who has no fixt purpose, or who altho his purpose be fixt does not know how to keep his attention on it and who is always letting himself be led away from it, life moves in a haphazard fashion. On the other hand, to him who frequently stops to get his bearings and to set his course life has nothing that is unforeseen.

But this foresight implies that we need to have a very clear idea of what we ourselves actually are, and of our natural faults, and the causes which generally make us waste time. It implies that we must lay out our line of conduct in reference to our failings, and must, as it were, never lose sight of ourselves.

We can thus contrive to diminish day by day the element of risk in our existence. Not only shall we know without any question what we are going to do and say under some particular circumstance as, for instance, breaking with a certain companion, changing one's lodging or restaurant or running away to the country for a little while; but we can still further draw up a complete and detailed plan of battle against all perils from within.

Such a plan is of the greatest importance. If it is carefully prepared, one knows what one must do when a sexual suggestion steals into the mind, and will not be driven out. One knows how to conquer attacks of vague sentimentality; how to get the better of the blues and to rise above discouragement. Like a wise general, one must not only estimate

the obstacles to be overcome in the strength of the enemy, in the difficulties of the ground and the failings of one's own troops, but one must count up one's own chances of success by taking into consideration the weakness of the enemy's commander, the advantages of such a ridge or elevation in the ground, and of the spirit of his own forces. Then one can march to the front. The enemies at home and abroad are known, their tactics and their weak points are also known, and there is no doubt of final victory, for one will have foreseen everything, even an orderly retreat in case of temporary defeat.

It is to just such dangers from within and without, by which the student may be assailed, that we must devote our attention. We must study the proper tactics to overcome them. We shall see how we can utilize external circumstances and even make the very things that have brought on a moral relapse cooperate in the self-education of the will.

Just so true it is that reflection and intelligence are the surest liberators of the will, so true it is that in time the powers of light will triumph over the forces of the senses.

As we have seen, meditative reflection is marvelously fertile in results: It gives birth to strong affective emotions; it transforms vacillating tendencies into energetic resolutions; it utilizes the influence of the suggestions of language and passion; it enables us to get a clear glimpse of the future, and to foresee the dangers arising from our own nature and to avoid the external circumstances of our environment, that contribute to our natural indolence. But are these important advantages the only benefit which we may expect from it? No; for in addition to the direct aid which it brings us, it is rich in indirect results.

It enables us to evolve from the experience of each day certain rules which, tho at first provisional, gradually, as they are tested become definite, and finally acquire the authority and the strength of directing principles of conduct. These principles are formed by the slow deposit in the depth of thought of innumerable detailed observations. This deposit can never take place in the minds of careless or restless people. Such never profit by the past, and like inattentive pupils, they

are always making the same mistakes and solecisms, but here they are mistakes and solecisms of conduct. On the other hand, to those who reflect, the past and the present serve as a perpetual lesson which enables them not to make avoidable mistakes in the future. These lessons finally become reduced to rules, which express our experiences concentrated and reduced to their quintessence. These rules, formulated into maxims, help to discipline our changing desires and those natural emotions which tend to urge us in different directions and to establish our conduct upon a definite steadfast basis. This force, which is inherent in all distinctly formulated principles, springs from two contributory causes.

First, it is an almost absolute rule in psychology that every idea of an action to be accomplished, or to be shunned, if it is very distinct, has, in the absence of hostile affective states, a power of realization, which is explained by the fact that there is no great essential difference between the idea and its action. When an action is conceived, it is already begun. The preimagining of an

action is like its frequent repetition, in that it produces a semi-tension, which precedes the final tension in such a way that the preconceived action is rapidly executed. The ringleader of the inclination has not a chance to raise his voice. For example, you have resolved to go to your room and work, but you foresee that a friend, who has already asked you to go with him to the theater, will be apt to insist. You prepare your reply and you hear yourself saying: "I am very sorry, I can not go with you; but something has come up which makes it absolutely necessary for me to go home." The very firm decided tone in which you will say this, will cut off all possibility of changing your own mind, and will also make it impossible for your friend to insist any further.

In politics, it is the men of clearly defined and bold initiative who lead the wavering and the timid and the mere ranters. So, also, in consciousness it is the clear decided mental state which remains master of the situation. If you plan out even to the smallest detail the line of conduct which you ought to follow, you will foresee as you develop

your program just where suggestions of laziness and vanity will come in, and will be able to nip them in the bud.

Herein lies the first cause of the power of principles. It is not the only one nor even the most important. As a matter of fact, the process of thought is too swift to permit us to be always dragging a load of images along after us. We replace certain groups of special thoughts by convenient abbreviations and signs which we readily understand and which we call words. We know that if we wish to, we only need to fix our attention on one of these signs for a moment to have its particular image rise up before us, just as hundreds of dried-up rotifers will come to life if one lets a drop of water fall upon them. It is just the same with our sentiments. They are heavy, cumbersome things and hard for thought to handle; therefore, they are replaced in current usage by words which are short, handy signs, which, by association are always ready to awaken the sentiments which they represent. Certain words vibrate, so to speak, with the emotion which they signify: such are the words honor, no-

bility of soul, human dignity, felony, cowardice, etc. In just the same way principles are concise abbreviations, which are all powerful to awaken the complex sentiments of greater or less strength which they represent in the ordinary state of consciousness. When meditation has given rise to an emotion either for or against an idea, it is a good plan to preserve it, as these emotions disappear very quickly, in the form of a set phrase or as a formula which can be recalled in case of need, and which in a certain fashion sums up the whole emotion. One of the advantages of a definite formula is that it may become firmly fixt in the mind. As it is easily summoned into consciousness it brings along with it the associated feelings of which it is the practical sign. In exchange for the power which it derives from the feelings, it bestows upon them its own clearness and the ease with which it can be aroused when it is wanted and carried about. If we had no such clear rules in the education of self, we would lose our general point of view as well as our adroitness in the struggle against our environment and passions. Without them, it would be like

fighting in the dark, and the greatest victories would be incomplete.

Thus, rules of conduct give the will that decision and spontaneous vigor which assures its triumph; they become convenient substitutes for the sentiments which we want to arouse. Here again it is meditation which calls forth these new and most valuable aids to our emancipation, since it alone enables the mind to abstract from our innumerable experiences those constant coexistences and sequences on which our science of life is based; that is to say, our power of foreseeing and directing the future.

To sum up, meditative reflection produces outbursts of affective enthusiasm which are most valuable when one knows how to use them. It is, furthermore, the great liberating power, because it enables us to hold back that turbulent host of sentiments and passions and ideas, which are always pushing themselves without rime or reason into the light of consciousness. It also enables us to stop short in the midst of the excitements of the outside world and find ourselves. This power of withdrawing from the multitude

and living within one's self is one of the greatest happiness, because instead of being obliged to let ourselves be borne passively along without ever being able to come back, we can, at will, return to the happy memories of existence, dwell on them and live them over again.

In fact, this meditative reflection is nothing more than the power to be very strongly conscious of one's own personality. One experiences something of the joy that a strong swimmer feels in struggling against the waves, sometimes letting them rise up and pass over him like a caress and again plunging into them and taking them headlong. If our feeling of power in our victorious struggle against the elements produces such agreeable emotions, what a vital interest we shall feel in the struggle of the will against the brute forces of sensibility! It is because Corneille painted the joys of self-mastery that he occupies such a high place in the admiration of posterity. If his characters had had a less easy victory, and if their struggle against the fatalities of our animal nature had been more prolonged, his dramas would

have been much more human; but as he chose to offer us noble ideals, Corneille has become not only the first of French dramatic poets, but the most enlightened and admirable genius of all time.

II

WHAT MEDITATION MEANS AND HOW TO MEDITATE

I

As meditative reflection is such an important element in the work of enfranchisement, it is important to find out how we ought to meditate, and to inquire into the nature of the assistance which we may hope to derive from our knowledge of the laws of psychology and experience.

We must state once again that meditative reflection enables us to stir up powerful emotions of affection or of hatred in our souls; it leads us to make resolutions, to form our conduct along certain lines, and also shows us how to escape from that double vortex of thoughts, ideas and conscious states that spring up within us, and those that are suggested by the outside world.

The broad general rule for profitable reflection and meditation is based on our knowledge of the very nature of thought. We think with words. As we have already said,

we have been obliged, in thinking, to get rid of real images, because they are heavy and cumbersome, and not easily managed. In place of them we have substituted short signs that are easily retained and easily passed on to others: These signs are our common words. A word associated with a thing has the power of calling up the thing at will, on condition that the word has entered the memory after one has had experience with the thing, or at least that the experience of the thing has been added to the knowledge word. Unfortunately, when we are children we learn the words first (except those which express elementary states of consciousness, simple perceptions, etc.). With the great majority of words which we have learned to use we have lacked the time or the opportunity, or possibly the courage to find out the real meaning which the word conveys. Our "ears of corn" are very scantily filled, and often entirely empty. All of us, without exception, have a great number of such words in our memory. I, for instance, have never heard the "*barrir*"[1] of an elephant;

[1] The cry, as in pain or rage.

the word "barrir" conveys nothing to me whatever. The masses have quantities of such words. They will often say in order to end a discussion, that "experience" has shown, etc. They are absolutely ignorant of the necessary conditions under which experience will be worth anything. And so on, one after another. If we examine the common words that we use, we shall be amazed at the vagueness of many of our thoughts, and we shall even find that the most intelligent men sometimes talk like parrots, without any real meaning back of the words they utter.

Well, to meditate is, as it were, to thrash the straw to get the grain. The most important rule which we must make for our guidance is always to replace words by the thing for which they stand. Not by vague indefinite pictures of things, but by things seen in minute detail. We must always try to individualize our thought and make it concrete. If, for example, it is the question of a young man making up his mind to decide not to smoke. He must examine all the drawbacks attendant upon smoking, without omitting

a single one, from the discoloration of his teeth to the eighty dollars a year that a single cigar after each meal would cost. He must take the trouble to verify Tolstoi's very true observation that tobacco dulls the keenness of the mind. He must try some day when he feels that his mind is very clear to follow some subtle philosophic deduction, then to continue it while he smokes. He will then find out how hard it is to fix his mind on what he is reading and to understand it. Several similar experiences will convince him that tobacco really does dull the penetrating and discriminating powers of the mind. He will remember, on the other hand, that the pleasure of smoking is one of those purely physical pleasures, which will disappear, as so many other pleasures do, only to give place to a tyrannical habit. He will recall all the cases that he knows of, where people have suffered from this tyranny. By such observation and many others the resolution will gain in force. The same method of seeing things in detail must be applied when one is dwelling upon the satisfaction that work brings with it.

It is only by employing the most detailed analysis that the suggestions of language, the illusions of passion, and the deceptive influence of bad advice can be allayed. The much reiterated statement that Paris is the only place where good work can be done will be challenged in the practical portion of this book. It is, moreover, just this kind of detailed observation that enables us to acquire unerring forewarning of the dangers which are likely to proceed from our passions and our laziness, as well as the forewarning, not only of dangers, but of benefits as well, which will probably come from our environment, our social relations, our profession, or our chance opportunities.

In order to be able to meditate to the best possible advantage, we must avoid distraction, and concentrate our thoughts on our idea; then we must consult the books which deal with the subject of our actual meditation, and read over our notes. By an energetic use of the imagination we can represent to ourselves very clearly and succinctly and concretely all the elements of danger which we are likely to run, and all the ad-

vantages to be derived from such a course of conduct or from another. It is not enough to touch upon these rapidly. We must, as it were, hear and feel and touch. We must reflect so intensely as to make the thing we are thinking about as really present as if it actually were so. As really present, did I say? Much more so, I should have said, for just as art can render a scene or a landscape more logical and more united, and therefore more realistic than reality, so our imagination ought to make the object of our meditation more distinct to us, more logical and truer than it is in reality, and therefore more vital and more capable of influencing us.

II

There are certain helpful methods by which our reflections are enabled to produce their effect. The greatest leaders of the Catholic faith, rich in the experience of their predecessors, and their own personal observations which they have unceasingly gathered from the confessional, to whom the

arousing of powerful emotions in the soul is not a means, but the supreme end, show us the great psychological value of even the most trifling practises. One can not attend a church ceremony without being filled with admiration for the unimpeachable thoroughness which characterizes its every detail. For example, in a funeral service, every gesture, every attitude, all the chants, the organ, even the light from the stained-glass windows, combine in a marvelously logical manner to weld the grief of the relatives into a religious exaltation. To those who attend such ceremonies with sincere faith the emotion must penetrate into the innermost recesses of the soul.

But even in church these emotional ceremonies are the exception, and the spiritual directors have recourse to a certain number of bodily practises which, they advise, be followed, and which are sure to arouse emotion. Without going into the subject of "retreats" and confining ourselves only to those practises which they recommend in solitude, one can not but be struck by the number of ways in which they resort to physical actions to

support moral strength. St. Dominick invented the rosary, thereby quickening meditation by a manual occupation, which almost partook of the nature of a pastime. St. François de Salles recommends, especially as a means of surmounting one's periods of indifference, that one should have recourse to external actions and attitudes, which are likely to suggest thoughts, to reading and to words spoken aloud. Does not Pascal constantly speak of "falling automatically upon one's knees?" Leibnitz himself (*Systema theologicum*), in a passage that is but little known, says: "I do not share the feeling of those, who, under the pretext of worshiping in spirit and in truth, would banish from divine worship everything that touches the senses or excites the imagination, without taking into consideration our human infirmities . . . we can neither fix our attention on our spiritual thoughts nor engrave them on our minds without connecting them with some external sign: . . . the more expressive the signs, the more efficacious they are!"

Thus profiting by experience, when we are

trying to meditate, and the inspiration will not come, we should turn to some book or passage especially adapted to our need; we should insure our attention by reading the words aloud. This, as we have seen,[1] is a sure means of bringing our representations vividly before us, and oblige them to obey us. We ought even to write out our meditations taking advantage of the precedence, which the presentative states have over our representations to direct the latter according to our will. Especially should we use those presentative states which we have mentioned, which we recommend (words spoken aloud, writing, etc.). In this way we can drive out of consciousness the principal obstacles to reflection, the memory of the pleasures of the senses and distractions of the imagination, and substitute for them the line of ideas which we wish to follow.

As for the most convenient time to carry on such affective meditations, the most appropriate seems to us the last week of vacation before going back to our course of study. It is a good plan, in each vacation—that is

[1] See Book I, Chapter I, Sec. 2.

to say, three times a year—to choose some pleasant retreat either in the woods or on the seashore and there call up in review all the meditations which might be useful to us. This kind of a "retreat" is exceedingly profitable. It will invigorate the will and bring a sense of conscious personality to the student. But, in addition to this, he must, in the course of the university year, manage to have many moments for reflection in his intervals of activity. At night before going to sleep, or during the night when he awakens, or while taking a few moments' rest, what is easier than to renew his good resolutions, and to decide what his occupations and his recreations shall be? What occupation could be more useful on waking in the morning, while dressing, or on the way to his work, than for him to encourage his mind to "blossom with noble aspirations," and to lay out his plan of conduct for the day? Such habits of frequent meditation are very quickly formed. The adoption of them is, moreover, so rich in good results that young people can not be too strongly advised to make the necessary effort to establish such habits.

III

THE ROLE OF ACTION IN THE EDUCATION OF THE WILL

I

Meditative reflection is an indispensable element in the education of the will, but by itself it is powerless. It gathers the scattered forces of the mind together for united action and gives enthusiasm and incentive; but, just as the strongest winds of heaven pass uselessly by if they meet no sail to swell and drive forward, so even the most powerful emotions lie sterile if they do not, each time that they arise, contribute some of their energy to our activity, in the same way that some of the work a student does is registered in his memory. So is our generative line registered in our habits of activity. Nothing is lost in our psychological life; nature is a most scrupulous accountant. Those actions which appear the most insignificant, if only they are constantly repeated, will

form for us in the course of weeks or months or years an enormous total which is inscribed in organic memory in the form of ineradicable habits. Time, which is such a valuable ally in helping us to obtain our freedom, works with the same tranquil persistency against us when we do not oblige it to work for us. It makes use of the dominant law of psychology which is the law of habit, either for or against us. Supreme in its power and sure of its triumph, habit proceeds slowly forward in its scarcely perceptible march. One would say that it could appreciate to the full the tremendous efficacy of slow actions that are indefinitely repeated. An action which has once been accomplished, even tho most laboriously, is less difficult on its repetition; the third and fourth time the effort it requires, becomes still less and this continues to diminish until it disappears altogether. Did I say disappears? An action undertaken at first with compunction gradually begins to assume the proportions of a necessity, and altho it was frankly disagreeable at first, it finally reaches the point where its non-accomplishment becomes distressing.

This characteristic is a most valuable aid for us in regard to those actions which we wish to perform, for it is able promptly to change the rugged path upon which we hesitated to enter into a wide and pleasant road. It does a slight violence to our better feelings before it leads us whither we have decided to go, along that road which our laziness at first prevented us from taking.

This crystallization of our energy into habits can not be accomplished by meditative reflection; it requires action. It is hardly enough to point out merely in a general way the necessity of action, for the word is apt to be misleading, and too often hides from sight the very realities which it is meant to indicate. The activity in which we are interested now, is the activity of the student. To act, is for the student to accomplish a great many special actions, for just as there is no such thing as will, but only voluntary actions, so in the same way there is no such thing as action, but only individual acts. Action, to the student of philosophy, for example, means to get up at seven in the morning and read with the closest attention a chapter

of Leibnitz or Descartes; it means to take notes, etc. Even to read demands a great number of successive efforts of attention. Action means to go over the notes again, to learn them by heart, to look up references and material for an essay, to lay out a general plan of it, then to make a plan of each paragraph; it includes meditation, research and the patient working up of collected material.

It is very rare that the chance comes in life for the accomplishment of a great deed. Just as an excursion to Mont Blanc resolves into thousands of footsteps and various efforts, leaping from point to point and cutting notches in the ice, in the same way the life of a great thinker resolves itself into a long series of patient efforts. To act means, therefore, to perform thousands of small actions. Bossuet, who was a wonderful spiritual guide, preferred those little sacrifices, which, he said, were "often the most mortifying and humiliating" to "those extraordinary efforts where one attained great heights in an outburst of enthusiasm, but from which one fell into the abyss;" the slow but sure

gain, the simple acts, which often repeated gradually pass into habits . . . a little, he held, was enough for each day if each day accomplishes his little.[1] In short the brave man is not he who performs some great act of courage, but rather he who courageously performs all the acts of life. That student who, in spite of his disinclination, makes himself get up and look up a word in the dictionary, who finishes his work in spite of his desire to loaf a little, who reads to the end of a difficult page—he is the man of courage. It is by these thousand apparently insignificant actions that the will is strengthened, and "all work begins to bear fruit." We must, therefore, in the absence of great efforts, do hourly some small thing heartily, and excellently well. *Qui spernit modica paulatim decidet.*

The great thing is to escape even in our smallest actions from the bondage of laziness and from the distraction of desires and impulses that have nothing to do with our work. We ought always to be on the lookout for opportunities to win these little victories.

[1] See the Bossuet of Lanson.

Somebody calls you, perhaps, during your work. You have a feeling of rebellion, but you immediately get up and make yourself go promptly and cheerfully to look after the matter that requires your attention. After the lecture a friend wants you to go off with him; the weather is beautiful, but you promptly get back to work. You pass the library on your way home and are strongly tempted to go in, but you resolutely cross over to the other side of the street and walk rapidly past. It is by such self denials that you gradually acquire the habit of conquering your inclinations, and of having always and everywhere full control of yourself, . . . so that even when you take a nap or lounge for a little while, it is because you have made up your mind to take this rest. Thus it is that, while even sitting on his bench at school studying, a child can learn a science that is of more value to him than Latin or mathematics; the science of mastering himself, of struggling against inattention, against tedious difficulties and wearisome exercises, such as looking up words in a dictionary or rules in grammar, and

against the desire to waste time in day-dreams. And as a comforting result, he finds that his progress in study is always, no matter what one may say, in direct proportion to his progress in this work of mastering self; so true is it that energy of the will is not only the most valuable acquisition, but at the same time, the most productive of happy results.

And why are these little efforts of so much importance? It is because not one of them is lost: each has its share in the formation of habit, each makes the acts which follow more easy. Our actions react on us by leaving behind them the habit of paying attention, the habit of getting promptly to work, the habit of taking no more heed of the desires stirring within us than we do of the flies buzzing around us.

Further than that, action, as we have already seen, is most efficacious in sustaining thought itself. By continually projecting presentative states of the same nature as our ideas into consciousness, it strengthens the attention and brightens it when it burns low. To write out one's thoughts, to take notes in

reading, to make our arguments clear by expressing them in definite terms, all these, as we have said, lend the same kind of aid to thought as do manual experiments in the laboratory to the investigator, or formulas to the geometrician.

But there is another extremely important result of action. To act, is to a certain extent to set forth or proclaim our will. Our actions publicly enlist us on one side or the other. All moralists say that it is necessary for any one, who wants to lead a life that is consistent with his duty, to throw himself, "boldly and from the very start into the right way, in complete opposition to all habits, and all internal inclinations. . . . He must brave everything and tear himself away from the old self," and, according to the vigorous expression of Veuillot, he must serve God "boldly." It is impossible to overestimate the energy which is given to the feelings and the will by taking a decided public stand. Our previous acts are more binding upon us than we imagine, first, because the desire to be logical makes an inconsistent life so repelling, that one would prefer to stay as one

was rather than change even for the better, and then because we recognize the strong and perfectly justified human attitude that would be apt to attribute such inconsistency in our acts to a weakness of the will, almost bordering on insanity. That is why it is important when one breaks away from a life of indolence to do so with some publicity, to, as it were, pledge one's honor to one's self and to others. One's restaurant, apartment, or acquaintances must perhaps be changed. Each word spoken must be a corroboration of one's determination to do right: every discouraging sophism must be politely but energetically repulsed. One must never let any one scoff at work to be done, nor praise the life of the student who is drifting to his destruction. To be believed by others to be what we ourselves wish to be, doubles our power of self-improvement, because that satisfies that very profound need, which in our weakness we all feel, of having the approbation of others, even of people whom we do not know at all.

To these various influences of action must be added the pleasure that lies in action

itself, a pleasure so intense that many people live an active life for the sake of the activity, without purpose and without profit, often to their great harm. This pleasure has something intoxicating about it that goes to the head, which springs perhaps from the fact that action more than anything else, gives us a realizing sense of our own existence and our own strength.

It is therefore absolutely essential to combine action with meditation: indispensable, because it alone can form firmly established habits, and, what is more, can transform those very acts, which were at first most disagreeable to us, into necessities of existence. It is by action that we fortify ourselves to struggle against the downward tendencies of our nature, and to triumph constantly and at every turn over whatever hinders us in acquiring complete mastery of self. Furthermore, in letting our will be known to those around us, action pledges our honor; it reasserts our resolutions and, both of itself and by calling to its aid the power of opinion, thereby increasing its power, it brings us strong and manly joys in recompense.

II

Unfortunately, the time for voluntary activity is very short, and a large part of life is consumed by the physiological and social necessities of living. Up to five or six years of age a child lives an animal life. Its existence is to sleep and eat and play. It is kept busy disentangling from chaos the external impressions which throng into its consciousness, and far from dominating the outside world, it is stunned by it. Until eighteen years of age the boy has too much to do, and too much to study concerning what other people have thought, to be able to think for himself. It would seem as if when his secondary studies were finished he ought to belong to himself and should be able to bring to bear upon the study of himself and upon the society in which he lives, those faculties which have been sharpened and tempered by years of disinterested culture. Unfortunately if he is pretty well acquainted with the physical world in which he has grown up, his vision will suddenly become obscure, a cloud will

seem to pass on the one hand between his faculties of observation and himself, and on the other hand between his critical spirit and society. Vague dreams, great outbursts of enthusiasm without any object, will fill his mind. It is at this age that a revolution takes place in the body of the adolescent youth. It is the commencement of puberty. At the very age where he ought to be able to learn to master himself, his passions invade his soul. It is most unfortunate for him, if, as is the case in the colleges of Europe and America, he finds himself permitted to have entire liberty without any one to lean upon or to direct his conscience, and without any chance of piercing the thick atmosphere of illusions which smother him! The student feels like one stunned, incapable of finding his way, and is led by the prejudices which surround him. What man is there, who has gone through this experience, who, looking back to this epoch in life, has not curst the want of foresight on the part of society which throws young men on leaving school or college absolutely alone into a great city without moral support or without any other

council than the stupid formulas which are paraded in order to paint in brilliant colors what is nothing more than a life of bestiality? It is a strange thing, but there are many fathers of families who have a sort of prejudice against a life of good hard honest work on the part of a student. So great is the influence of contemporary ideas!

Add to this that in his isolation the young man does not even know how to work; he has never been taught any method of work adapted to his powers or to the quality of his mind. Thus the years devoted to higher studies generally count for nothing in this work of self-enfranchisement. Nevertheless, they are the beautiful radiant years of life! The student lives almost absolutely to himself alone. The thousand demands of social life scarcely weigh upon him at all. One sees no trace of the harness upon his shoulders; that is to say, of his profession or career. He is still free from those cares which he must assume later on as the head of a family. His days are his own, wholly his own! But alas! what good is such freedom to him if he is not master of himself?

"You have everything under your control here except yourself,"[1] one might quote to him, and the days slip by too often without profit.

Nevertheless, even with such utter freedom the necessities of existence consume a great deal of time. Rising and dressing, with a half-hour for one's toilet, the necessary goings and comings between the lecture halls and one's room and one's room to the restaurant; meals and the necessary time for digestion before one can do mental work again, a few visits, a few letters to write, unforeseen interruptions, necessary exercise, the hours that must be counted off in sickness; all this array of imperative necessities consume, if one adds the eight hours of sleep necessary to those who work, nearly sixteen hours a day. The calculation is not hard to make. Later there will be added to these demands those of one's career, and then, even by cutting down to its lowest possible limit the time devoted to meals and to exercise, there are very few, who can command five hours a day wholly to themselves to spend

[1] Beaumarchais, "Le mariage de Figaro."

upon their desired work or in tranquil meditation. Still further, if from our apparent work we subtract the time that must be spent in looking up references in books, in copying and writing, and even the time spent in pausing to rest, during which no effort is possible, we will see how very short the time is that can be devoted to real mental effort. Any one who reflects for a moment will wax wroth over those deceptive biographies which are so discouraging to young people, in which learned men and great political characters are represented as working fifteen hours every day!

Happily, as Bossuet has remarked in the passage already quoted, a little suffices for each day, if each day accomplishes that little. Even at the slowest pace one reaches the journey's end if one never stops. The important thing in intellectual work is not so much regularity as continuity. It has been said that genius is only infinite patience. All great works have been accomplished by persevering patience. It was by perpetually thinking about it that Newton discovered universal gravitation. "It is wonderful what

one can do with one's time, when one has patience to wait and not to hurry," wrote Lacordaire. Look at nature: A torrent which devastated the valley of Saint-Gervais brought with it only a very small quantity of refuse. On the other hand, the slow action of the frosts and rain, the scarcely perceptible movement of glaciers, manages in some way by the grinding of stone on stone to disintegrate rocky walls, and to bring an enormous quantity of alluvial deposit down to the valley every year. A torrent, which carries gravel along with it, wears every day into the granite over which it flows, and in the course of centuries it has hollowed gorges of great depth in the rock. It is the same way with the works of man: they advance by the accumulation of efforts which are so small when looked at by themselves that they seem out of all proportion to the work accomplished. Gaul, which was formerly covered with forests and fens, has been cleared and cultivated, ribbed with roads and canals and railways, and dotted with villages and towns, by myriads of muscular efforts which were insignificant in themselves. Each one of the

letters which go to make up the gigantic compendium of Saint Thomas Aquinas were written by Saint Thomas himself, and then it was necessary for the printers to pick the letters of the font one by one out of the case in order to set up the book and print it. It was by means of this incessantly repeated labor, lasting for several hours a day for fifty years, that this vast work was produced. All action, even acts of courage, may appear under two forms of unequal value. Sometimes it springs up suddenly with strong bursts of energy; sometimes, on the other hand, it takes the form of steady persevering patient work. Even in war the qualities of resistance against fatigue and discouragement are fundamental qualities, and it is from them that from time to time great deeds spring into being. But every-day work does not afford any opportunities for such brilliant fireworks. Sudden outbursts of exaggerated work are not to be recommended from any point of view, for they are nearly always followed by periods of exhaustion and laziness. True courage consists in long-persevering patience. The important thing for the student

to learn is never to be lazy. Time, as will readily be perceived, has an incomparable value, because lost moments can never be recovered. It is very important to economize it. But I am no advocate of rigorous rules and using one's time according to schedule where the employment for every hour is laid out in advance. It is seldom that one can follow such hours exactly, and our laziness is so ready to trump up some sort of justification that it frequently falls back upon them as an excuse for doing nothing in hours that were not appointed for some especial work. The only hours which one should scrupulously follow are those which are required by rest and exercise. On the other hand, the impossibility of forcing oneself to follow rules in the details of work, accustoms the will to being overthrown constantly in its efforts; and the feeling that we always are and always will be overcome in this struggle to do things at a set time is very apt to cause discouragement. It often happens that one is not in the best condition for work at a certain hour, but that one is quite ready for an exercise or a walk at the time set.

There must, therefore, be a greater allowance of liberty and spontaneity in intellectual work: the aim to be pursued in the education of our energy is not to acquire the habit of strict obedience to the orders of a Prussian corporal. Far from it—the end which the student has in view is wholly different. It is to develop activity, to learn to be always and everywhere active. There are no set hours for this undertaking because every hour lends itself to it. To be active means to jump bravely out of bed in the morning, to dress briskly and quickly and to set one's self down to one's work-table without any hanging back, and without allowing any outside preoccupation to penetrate the mind. To be active is never to read passively, but to be constantly making efforts. But it is just as much a part of this activity to get up resolutely and go out for a walk or to visit a museum, when one feels that one's nervous force is growing weak and that one's efforts are ceasing to be productive. For it is the greatest foolishness to persevere indefinitely in unprofitable work which only exhausts and discourages one. One must be ready to take

advantage of these moments of relaxation to visit picture-galleries, or to enjoy the conversation of intelligent friends. One can even practise this activity while eating, by making one's self chew one's food so thoroughly as to avoid putting extra work upon the stomach. The greatest misfortune for the student consists in being seized by attacks of inertia when, through lack of will, he stupidly squanders his time in shameful laziness. He takes hours to make his toilet, he wastes his morning in yawning and listlessly glancing through one book after another. He can not make up his mind on either side, either to do nothing at all or to set to work. He has no need to go looking for opportunities to be active, for they go slipping past him every day from the moment he gets up until the moment he goes to bed.

The most important thing in attaining this mastery of one's energy, is never to go to sleep without making up one's mind exactly what one is going to do the next day. I do not mean how much should be done, for one could apply to the system of laying out an exact measure of work, what we have just

said about working on schedule time. I am only speaking of the nature of the work. When one wakes the following morning, the mind will instantly grasp the situation and, without allowing a moment for distraction, will get right to work on the subject in hand, even while dressing, and the student will find his body set down at his work-table and his hand grasping a pen before he has even had a second to nurse his disinclination.

Furthermore, if while out working or listening to a lecture a pang of remorse rises into consciousness, if one feels a touch of grace in the heart and is aware of a wave of helpful emotion, then one must profit by it immediately. One must not follow the example of those who on Friday make the heroic decision that from the following Monday they will start to work, no matter what happens. If they do not apply themselves *immediately*, their imaginary resolution is only a deception which they practise upon themselves, a helpless passing inclination. As Leibnitz says, we must follow the good impulses which rise within us "as if the voice of God were calling us." To waste the effect

of these good impulses, to deceive them by deferring their execution until it is too late, failing to profit immediately by them in creating good habits and letting our soul taste the virile joys of work in such a way as to appreciate their value, is the greatest setback that can happen to the education of the energy.

As our object is not to conform to regular hours, but to act with vigor at all times and in all places, it is necessary to learn how to use the quarter hours and the minutes. Listen to what Darwin's son said of him.[1] "One of his characteristic traits was his respect for time. He never for a moment forgot how valuable a thing it was. He economized every minute. He never lost even a few moments which he had on his hands by imagining that it was hardly worth while to begin to work. . . . He did everything very rapidly and with a sort of represt ardor." These minutes and quarters of an hour, which nearly all of us foolishly lose because we think it is hardly worth while to begin a thing, mount up in the

1 "Life and Letters of Charles Darwin," Vol. II, Chap. I, p. 135, et seq. Paris, 1888.

course of a year to an enormous total. It was d'Aguesseau, I think, who, as his lunch was never ready on time, one day presented his wife with a book as a sort of "*hors d'oeuvre,*" written during the many quarters of an hour that he had had to wait. It is so easy in a spare five or ten minutes to "gird up" one's spirit by reading a paragraph with keen interest or by going on with a few more lines of one's work or by copying a passage or running through the table of contents of one's notes or lectures.

It is perfectly true to say, that time is never lacking to those who know how to take it. How true is the remark that they who have the most leisure, have the least time to accomplish what they ought to do, and, consequently, it is just as true that to complain of having no time to work is practically to acknowledge that one is cowardly and hates to make the effort!

But if we try to find out why it is that we lose so much time, we shall see that, in the majority of cases, our weakness is in some degree furthered by an indefinite idea of the task to be accomplished. It is a con-

stant experience of mine that if, before I go to sleep, I do not distinctly picture to myself my work for the next day, my morning will be useless. It is never enough merely to outline it in a general way and to say: "I will work to-morrow," nor even "to-morrow I will begin the study of Kant's 'Moral,' " but I must always set a distinct and particular task and say: "To-morrow I will resolutely begin at the commencement of the lecture on 'Practical Reason' by Kant," or "I will study and make a synopsis of such a chapter in physiology." To the precept of fixing one's self a set task, one must also add that of always finishing and finishing conscientiously what has been commenced, so that one will not have to come back to it. Never to be obliged to do a piece of work over again, and to do what we have to do in such a manner that it is done accurately, is an extraordinary economy of time. The student should therefore do all his reading in this thorough and energetic fashion, he ought to write out a resumé of what he has read and copy such extracts as he may foresee will be useful to him, and then immediately classify his notes

under the title of the table of contents in such a way that he can find them again when he wants to. In this way he will never need to read a book over again, unless it should be one of his bedside books. One goes slowly in this work, but as one only takes a step in advance after becoming definitely sure of what lies behind it, one never has to go back, and, altho the path is slow, one goes on steadily and continuously and, often, like the tortoise in the fable, gets ahead of the more agile but less methodical hare. There is no rule more essential to our mind for work than this: *Age quod agis!* Do each thing in its turn thoroughly and without haste and without agitation. De Witt, the Grand Pensionnaire of Holland, directed all the affairs of the republic yet, nevertheless, found leisure to go out into society and to dine with friends. When they asked him how he was able to find time to finish such a variety of business and still to amuse himself, he replied: "There is nothing easier: it is only a question of doing one thing at a time and of never putting off until to-morrow what could be done on the same day." Lord

Chesterfield recommended his son never to lose a moment's time even in the bathroom, and he used to cite the example of a man who always took several pages of an ordinary edition of Horace with him, and then dispatched them as a sacrifice to Cloaca!

Without pushing the idea of economizing time quite so far, it is certain that the utilization of every moment toward some one end is of the greatest value. The kind of activity that does not know how to apply the law of only doing one thing at a time, is unregulated activity. It has no unity, it flutters from one thing to another. It is perhaps even worse than laziness, for laziness becomes disgusted with itself, while this restless activity by reason of its sterility finally becomes disgusted with work; it substitutes for the joy of progress that uneasiness and boredom and disgust, that always come when one undertakes a number of things which one can never manage to finish. Saint Francis de Sales saw the hand of the Devil in these perpetual changes. One should not, he said, try to do several different things at one and the same time, "because, often the enemy

tries to induce us to begin several plans, so that when we are loaded with too many cares, we shall accomplish nothing and leave everything unfinished. . . . Sometimes he cunningly raises the desire within us to undertake some very excellent thing which he foresees, that we shall not be able to accomplish, in order to keep us from pursuing some less brilliant thing, which we could easily have achieved."[1]

On the other hand, I have often noticed that it is the things that are begun and not finished that make us lose the most time. They leave a sense of discomfort behind them, analogous to that which the long but vain search for the solution of a problem brings to us; one has a discontented feeling; the subject of the neglected work avenges itself for our disdain by haunting our minds and disturbing us in all our other work: this is because our awakened attention has not had its legitimate satisfaction. Work well accomplished leaves a feeling of contentment in the mind that is, to a certain extent, like a satisfied appetite; we

[1] "Traité de l'amour de Dieu," VIII, Chap. IX.

feel as tho a burden had been lifted from our thoughts, and they are free to turn to some new occupations.

What is true of interrupted work is also true of work which we ought to do, but which is left undone. We have, for instance, the feeling that we must write a letter, but nevertheless we do not write it. The days pass and we nurse the thought of our duty like remorse until it becomes most exasperating, but still we do not write: the obsession finally becomes so annoying that at last we set to work. But when it is done in this tardy fashion, we do not feel the pleasure and relief that usually accompany work.

Therefore let us do each thing at the moment when it should be done, and let us do it thoroughly.

III

When a young man has formed this very important and productive habit of deciding things definitely and of doing his work without feverish haste, but in a thorough, straightforward and honest manner, there is

no high intellectual destiny to which he may not aspire. Whether he has new ideas or whether he sees old questions from a new point of view, he is going to harbor these ideas in his thoughts during eight or ten years of steady work. They will gradually become surrounded by hundreds of similes and comparisons and likenesses hidden to others, which will become organized and nourish the original ideas until they have grown strong and powerful. And just as great trees spring from acorns, so from such thoughts, fostered by one's attention for many years, there will be put forth powerful books, which will be to honest souls in their struggle against evil what clarions sounding the charge are to soldiers, or else these thoughts will become concrete and will express themselves in a beautiful harmonious life of uprightness and generous activity.

We must not deceive ourselves on this point. If we have had the good fortune to be able to enter upon the intellectual life, the aristocracy which education has bestowed upon us can become as thoroughly odious as the aristocracy of money, if we do not make

our intellectual superiority acceptable by the superiority of our moral life. All of you students, who are leaving your college days behind, and who have become students of law or science or literature or medicine, ought to feel it your duty to become the most active and persevering benefactors of those who are forced to win their livelihood in narrow circumstances without ever being able to glance beyond the present hour. The students must necessarily form the directing class in every country, even in the countries of universal suffrage, for the multitude, incapable of directing itself, will always turn for guidance to those who have trained and fortified their spirit by years of disinterested culture. This situation imposes duties on all young people who have received the benefit of a higher education; for it is evident that to know how to lead others, one must first be able to lead one's self. If one would preach moderation, unselfishness, and devotion to others, it must be by force of example, and one must be able to demonstrate a life of active, energetic work by one's actions as well as by work.

If every year half a dozen students would go back to their little villages and towns as physicians or lawyers or professors, with their minds firmly made up to lose no opportunity to speak or to live in favor of the right, determined then to show their colors on every occasion, no matter how insignificant it might seem, to let no injustice pass without active and persevering protestation, to introduce more kindness and true justice and more tolerance into social relations, there would be formed in twenty years' time for the good of the country a new aristocracy which would be universally respected, and which would be most conducive to the general good. Every young man who leaves his university and sees nothing in law or medicine, etc., but the money which these professions may bring, and who has no thought of anything else but stupid, vulgar amusements, is a pitiful creature, and fortunately public sentiment is not so very far astray upon this point.

IV

But, the objection may be raised, will not such continual work and constant preoccupation with one idea, and activity always keyed up to concert pitch, have a very bad effect on the health? This objection comes from the false idea which is popularly held of intellectual work. The continuity, of which we have spoken, is meant in the human sense. It is evident that sleep interrupts work and implies rest. It is also clear, according to what we have just said, that the great majority of our waking time is of necessity filled with distractions that interfere with intellectual work. To work only means to train our mind not to think of anything else but the object of our study during the time that we have nothing else to do. Furthermore, this word work ought not to call up a picture of a student seated with his shoulders bowed over his task; one can read or meditate or compose by walking up and down; it is the best and the least fatiguing method and the most productive of original work. Walking

seems to be a very helpful accompaniment to the assimilation of intellectual material, and aids one in getting one's thoughts into shape.

In short, to be an intellectual worker, by no means presupposes as a corollary that one should be one-sided. To-day, especially, when we know so well the relation of the physical to the moral, we would deserve to be the laughing-stock of the ignorant, if we did not know how to take care of our health. The acquisition of data is the least part of a task; their choice and their arrangement are very much more important, but even that does not require that one should sit down all day. A savant is not the man who knows the greatest number of facts, but he whose mind is always active and always in working order. We must not confuse science and erudition. Erudition too often implies mental laziness. It is not enough to have a good memory to be able to create, but it is necessary that the mind should be able to use materials and not merely be encumbered by them.

Altho it may be quite the correct thing to appear to be worn out by reason of one's work, and altho it may apparently redound

to the honor of our will, yet we must recognize that we would have the proof that work was the *only* cause of our breakdown. Such a proof is impossible to make. We would have to take into consideration all the other causes of fatigue, and every foolish interruption. And, let us say frankly, that one never knows whether what one attributes to work may not come, for instance, from sensuality. I do not believe that either in college or the university the young men who are perfectly straight often break down; the only overstrain at this age, alas! is that which is caused by vicious habits.

The part that this unfortunate indulgence of sensuality plays in producing a breakdown is this: it gives rise to envious and jealous deceptions, and chiefly, that it causes a sickly exaggerated sense of self-esteem springing from a false idea of our place in the world and an exaggerated sense of our own personality. If one is sufficiently energetic to drive these wearing feelings out of one's mind, one great source of fatigue will be thereby eliminated.

It seems to us that well-ordered intellectual

work—we mean, of course, that which respects the laws of hygiene appropriate to the life and circumstances of the individual, for this only can lead to the highest development of thoughts—that such work, freed from the compromising bonds of sensuality, happy-hearted, confident work without jealousy or wounded vanity, is eminently helpful in establishing health. If one provides the attention with uplifting and fruitful ideas, thought elaborates them and organizes them. If one allows impressions to furnish these materials by chance, the fatigue is practically the same as when the will presides over their choice. But it is seldom that chance, that enemy of our peace of mind, does not bring with it a swarm of contradictory thoughts. In fact, man lives in society and he needs the esteem and even the eulogy of others. But as others have rarely as good an opinion of us as we have of ourselves, and as, on the other hand, a great many of our fellow men lack tact and even charity, it frequently happens, in every walk in life, that social relations are full of friction. The true worker will gather fresh courage when he sees how cruelly the

lazy pay for their laziness, because there springs up in their mind, as in an uncultivated field, such a host of weeds. They spend their time fuming and worrying over petty ideas, petty disagreements and jealousies and insignificant ambitions.

Nothing is so good for one's happiness as to exchange preoccupations for occupations, and what is true of one's happiness is true of health. It is so true that work is the profoundest joy of humanity, that whoever will not obey this law must renounce with it all uplifting and lasting joys.

We must add to these observations, that unmethodical, *scattered* work is very wearying, and that what often is imputed to the work itself, comes from work which is merely badly directed. The thing that wearies one is the multiplicity of occupations which bring with them none of the joy of an accomplished task. When the mind is drawn in several different directions, it always has a sense of dull uneasiness during its work. It is the undertakings which are left in a rough, unfinished state that give rise to such wearisome mental worry. Michelet told M. de Gon-

court that at about thirty years of age he suffered terribly from headaches, caused by the number of things that he had to do, and that he resolved to read no more books, but to make them instead. "From that day, when I arose in the morning," he said, "I knew exactly what I was going to do, and as my mind was never fixt on more than one object at a time, I was cured."[1] Nothing is truer than the fact that having several different kinds of work on hand at one and the same time is to court fatigue. *Age quod agis.* Let us do thoroughly whatever we have to do. Not only is it the best way of getting up quickly, as we have already seen, but it is the surest way of avoiding fatigue and of gathering a harvest of joy in work that has been brought to a successful conclusion.

V

To sum up, altho meditation can arouse powerful emotions in the mind, it can only make use of them under the form of habits. Therefore, the education of the will is im-

[1] "Journal de Goncourt, March 12, 1864.

possible without the creation of good, strongly established habits, without which we should always have to be making the same efforts over again. They alone enable us to maintain our conquests and to march on further. We now know that it is by action alone that we can create such habits.

By action, we mean the courageous performance of every one of those small actions which lead to a definite end. Action confirms thought, and publicly announces which side we are on; it also produces great pleasure in itself.

Alas! the time of activity, which is already too short, is still further diminished by the student's lack of method in his work; in spite of that, as we have already said, "a little is enough for each day, if each day accomplishes that little." The patient and incessant repetition of effort produces enormous results: therefore, what the student needs to acquire is this habit of unceasing activity. In order to accomplish his purpose, he should always lay out his work for the next day the evening before. He should take advantage of every helpful emotion, fin-

ish all work that he begins, do only one thing at a time, and be careful not to waste a single minute. With such habits, he may aspire to the noblest destiny. They will, at the same time, put him in a position to pay back to society the debt of thanks for the many benefits which he has received from her and for which he owes her recognition.

Work conceived and undertaken in this spirit can never lead to a breakdown; the fatigue, which is usually attributed to work, is nearly always caused by excesses of sensuality, by restless excitement, by egotistical emotions or by bad methods; and if it be true that to be calm and thankful and happy helps to keep one well, such well-conceived work and the habit of noble and uplifted thought can not but be beneficial to the health.

IV

BODILY HYGIENE CONSIDERED FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF THE STUDENT'S EDUCATION OF HIS WILL

I

Until now we have studied the psychological side of our subject. We must now examine the physiological conditions of self-mastery. The will and its highest form of expression, the attention, can not be disassociated from a nervous system. If the nerve centers become rapidly exhausted, or if, when once exhausted, they recover their vigor extremely slowly, no effort or perseverance is possible. Bodily weakness is accompanied by a weak will and feeble, wandering attention.

In every kind of activity success depends more upon indefatigable energy than upon any other cause; the first condition of all success in the conquest of self, is, to quote a celebrated expression, to be "a healthy animal." Nearly all moral enthusiasm co-

exists with those thrilling moments when the body, like a well-tuned instrument, plays its part without false notes and without obtruding itself upon the inner consciousness. In these moments of abandoned vigor, our will is strong within us, and we can hold our attention upon anything for a long time. On the other hand, when we are weak or exhausted, we are painfully conscious of the chains which link our spirit to our body, and our will is often defeated by reason of disturbances of a physiological nature. We remember that the natural recompense of all work, which expends our forces without exhausting them, is a feeling of well-being and enjoyment, which lasts for a considerable time. If we are exhausted before we have finished our work, this pleasant feeling of power to do things does not come, but is replaced by a disagreeable sensation of fatigue and disgust; to those unfortunate people who have, for some reason, become debilitated, work deprived of this keenest joy, which is its natural reward, becomes a task, a toil and a torment.

Furthermore, all psychologists agree upon

the importance of good physiological conditions for the memory; when an active circulation sends pure, well-nourished blood flowing through the brain, memories and consequently habits, are promptly engraven and last for a long time.

But the power of paying sustained and close attention, which is such a help to memory, is not the only reward which health brings. It has still further a very great influence upon one's happiness. It is, as we have said, like the figure which, placed before the zeros of life, give them their value. The metaphor is a happy one. Voltaire once said of Harlay, who had a charming wife and every favor of fortune: "He has nothing, if he cannot digest."

Unfortunately, intellectual work, if it is not properly undertaken, can be very harmful. If it cuts off all bodily activity, and imposes a sedentary life and seclusion in badly aired rooms, especially if it requires a sitting posture, all these serious drawbacks, to which is often added that of an unhygienic diet, soon begin to have a bad effect upon the stomach; digestion becomes difficult, and as

the stomach is surrounded by a close network of nerves, the reaction of the disturbance of this organ upon the nervous system is considerable. After a meal the head becomes congested, the feet are apt to grow cold easily, there is a feeling of torpor and somnolence, which soon gives place to nervous irritability, which is in striking contrast to the comfort of peasants and workmen after their dinner. This nervous condition gradually gets worse, and many brain workers finally get to the point where they can no longer control their impressions. Their hearts palpitate at the slightest opposition, and there is a feeling of pressure in the stomach. This is the first stage of neurasthenia, for neurasthenia nearly always has some defective condition of the functions of nutrition as its point of departure. The brain ceases to be the chief regulator, and instead of the calm and vigorous impulses of a healthy life, one feels the irritability and depression of ill health.

However, the omnipotence which time grants us in the work of mastering ourselves is also bestowed upon us for the

purpose of changing our temperament and fortifying our health. Huxley, in a celebrated passage, compares us to chess-players. We have as a partner a patient and pitiless adversary, who takes advantage of our slightest mistake, but who generously rewards the good players. This adversary is Nature, and wo be to him who does not know the rules of the game. In studying these rules, which are the laws discovered by the wise, and above all, in applying them, one is sure of winning high stakes which means good health. But it is the same with this conquest of health as it is in the conquest of our liberty: it is not the result of a *fiat,* but rather of innumerable little actions, which one performs a hundred times a month or which one wilfully neglects. One must bring one's attention to bear on a great many different points and learn to put the proper value upon each detail. One must watch the weather to see if it is warm or cold or damp. One must take care that the atmosphere is pure, one must see that one works in a good light, and must look out for the quality of one's meals, and must remember to take suffi-

cient exercise. "But," it may be argued, "so much fuss about one's self would make life ridiculous and would take all one's time." Pure sophism! Such care of one's body becomes a matter of habit. It takes no more time to eat carefully and obey the rules of digestion, than it does to eat poor food carelessly. It requires no more time to take a little walk for one's digestion than it does to accomplish that function badly by lying at ease upon the sofa or lingering lazily to read the papers at the club. There is no appreciable time lost in occasionally changing the air in one's study. It is enough to settle once for all upon such modifications as one may require in his régime of life. The only thing that could possibly prevent one from acting in a sensible way, is laziness, that intellectual laziness that will not look ahead, and the physical laziness that will not carry out a plan.

Here again the recompense will be health, that is to say, the condition of all the rest, of success as well as of happiness.

The functions to which we should pay the closest attention are the functions of nutri-

tion. It it a very important question to know the nature and the amount of food which one should eat daily. Before the works of Berthelot appeared, the subject of alimentation was treated empirically. To-day, the problem presents itself in a very distinct form. One actually knows that none of the fats or carbohydrates take the place of albumin in building up the tissues. Albumin is therefore necessary to alimentation. But on the other hand, if instead of merely supplying a sufficient quantity of albumin, one gives more than is necessary, a curious result is obtained. The excess allowance causes, to the detriment of our organs, a precipitation of albumin that is much greater than the amount of albumin taken in.[1] If one eats about seventy-five grams of nitrogenous food every day, that is enough. All that is taken in above this weight, instead of being assimilated, tends to cause a precipitation of albumin of the muscles. Here, then, is the first thing to remember: the student eats in his restaurants two or three times as much meat as it is necessary for him to eat.

[1] Compare G. Sée, "Formulaire alimentaire," 1893.

Further, whatever may be the amount of albumin ingested, if we do not at the same time take in fats or carbohydrates, the albumin will be precipitated; but the precipitation stops if the contrary is the case. Hence these food elements, when they are combined with the seventy-five grams[1] of albumin, are called "a balanced nitrogenous ration."

Work is the prime cause of the decomposition of the fats and starches. We know that a man must expend daily from 2,800 to 3,400 calories if he works hard.[2] Seventy-five grams of albumin give 307 calories, and considering 300 calories as the highest average, the intellectual worker must find about 2,700 calories. As he can scarcely assimilate more than 200-250 grams of fats ($225 \times 9.3 = 2{,}092$ calories), he must therefore get about 600 calories from carbohydrate foods (about 150 grams). One only needs to look up in the special books written on the subject the value of each food in albumin, fats and carbohydrates in order to choose his food for the day.

[1] 1 gram = 15 grains 100 grams = about 3 oz.

[2] 1 gram albumin gives 4.1 calories. 1 gram fat gives 9.3 calories. 1 gram carbohydrate gives 4.1 calories.

The conclusion which is forced upon us from experience is that we eat too much, especially of meat. We require the stomach and the intestines to perform a ridiculous amount of work. In the majority of people in comfortable circumstances, the greater part of the force acquired by the labor of digestion is used to digest. Do not imagine that we have exaggerated this. During the act of digestion we would, as a matter of fact, digest the walls of the stomach and the intestines if their surfaces did not constantly renew the tissue which protects them, and which is very rapidly formed anew as fast as the digestive secretions attack them. This work alone is enormous. The intestines are seven or eight times as long as the body, and average thirty centimeters around. The working surface of the intestines and the stomach is therefore at least five meters square. Add to the considerable labor of this incessant renewal for several hours each day of the papillæ which line such a surface, the force used in chewing, the force required by the peristaltic movements of the stomach, by the formation of a considerable quantity

of saliva, by the production of the digestive secretions of the stomach and pancreas and gall-bladder, and one will begin to get an idea of the prodigious expenditure of force which the act of digestion necessitates.

It is therefore very clear that men who eat too much are reduced to playing the not very honorable rôle of slaves to their digestive tract. Remember, also, that the majority find it too much trouble to chew such a quantity of food thoroughly, and that they thereby still further increase and prolong the labor of digestion, for the digestive secretions penetrate very slowly through masses which are not thoroughly masticated.

How useful a little pamphlet would be showing what proportion of albuminous, fatty or assimilable carbohydrate elements are to be found in each food! Certain specialized articles give the proportion in nutritious elements; therefore, we know to-day that many of the nitrogenous compounds are not, properly speaking, foods that will repair the tissues. With such a table, the student could prepare his menu with the double idea of obtaining good nourishment and of avoid-

ing the imposition of any extra work upon his digestive organs which would be detrimental to his intellectual work.

The question of the number of meals and the time at which they should be taken seems to be of small importance beside this of the proportion of food elements. Not that we expect the student to weigh every dish as Cornaro did, but, after weighing several, he would begin to get a little better idea of what he ought to eat, and he would at least avoid the enormous waste of force which is expended by the young man who frequents the restaurants, and who, surrounded by noise and conversation and discussions, eats to the very limit of his capacity.[1]

[1] We can not leave this subject without speaking of the use of coffee. It ought by no means to be proscribed. Taken in a large quantity and prepared by the filtration method, which draws out all its strength, it is enervating. Prepared according to the custom of the Arabs, that is infused, and taken in small cups, it is less irritating, and furnishes a useful aid to the work of digestion. Even between meals, as, for instance, in the morning, a small quantity will dissipate that dulness of thought of which so many workers complain, and will stimulate the intellect to quicker work. On the condition that the use of coffee is not abused, and that, on the other hand, one takes advantage of its excitation to get to work, there is no harm in using it.

The hygiene of respiration is more simple. It hardly seems necessary to state that one should breathe pure air; but how many times have I seen young men prefer to breathe close, vitiated air, rather than let in a little cold along with the fresh air. The hygiene of buildings devoted to education and of students' dwellings is still in a very primitive state in regard to this matter. It has, however, been demonstrated that bad air makes one restless, irritable, and discontented. The organism, not having the healthy stimulation which pure air gives it, is tempted to seek vicious stimulations. The student is not obliged to breathe the same air over and over again in his room, he can air it often—or, what is still better, he can work in the open air—or, still further, he can walk up and down in his room and read or speak out loud. Deaf mutes, who never have the exercise of speaking, have very weak lungs. They are hardly able to blow out a candle placed a few centimeters from their mouth. Speech is an active exercise for the lungs.

We must also call attention to the fact that a stooping attitude while writing or read-

ing is very restricting to the respiratory movements, and that it may, in the long run, become very harmful. As a means of struggling against this cause of weakness, it is a good plan to form the habit of sitting up very straight and throwing out the chest, so as to allow perfect freedom to the respiratory movements.

Nevertheless, these precautions are not enough, and it is very important to stop work frequently and to get up and go though a few of those excellent exercises which M. Lagrange has called "respiratory gymnastics." These exercises consist of drawing in deep breaths like those which we instinctively make in the morning when we stretch ourselves. The two arms are raised very slowly and then held outstretched, while the breath is drawn in as deeply as possible, when they are lowered while the breath is slowly expelled. In the same way it is useful, while lifting the arms, to raise one's self on tiptoe, as if trying to make one's self taller. This operation tends to straighten any curvatures in the spinal column, while at the same time it permits the ribs to stretch apart and describe a

much longer arc of the circle than they usually make. Furthermore, this exercise prevents ankylosis of the ribs. It, as it were, "shakes out" or unfolds a great many collapsed pulmonary vesicles, to which oxygen does not penetrate. The surface which effects an exchange between the blood and the air is increased. Marey has observed that the rhythm of respiration remains modified even in repose after such exercises. We must point out that the use of dumb-bells for this purpose is contra-indicated, because no effort is possible without some arrest of respiration.

These precautions, altho they are very good, are, nevertheless, only palliative, and can never take the place of real exercise.

It is evident that exercise does not of itself create anything, but it acts indirectly by improving the general tone of all the functions of nutrition.

Altho the respiratory capacity, as we have just seen, may be increased by exercises in one's room, to which one can have recourse from time to time, yet these exercises will not make the blood circulate more rapidly nor

pass more frequently through the lungs. The respiratory function and the circulatory function are in some ways the same function, seen from two points of view. All activity on the part of one acts upon the other. Lavoisier, in a communication to the Academy of Sciences (1789), called attention to the fact, that a man fasting, after muscular work, assimilated nearly three times as much oxygen as following a rest. Consequently, the first effect of exercise is to enable a considerable quantity of oxygen to penetrate the body. While the student, who is naturally sedentary, lives a less vital sort of life, he who exercises a greal deal in the open air approaches his work with richer blood and more active respiration. The brain is capable of more energetic and more prolonged work. The work of the heart itself is diminished by its slower beat, for, while sitting still tends to make the blood flow sluggishly in the capillaries, such sluggishness is accompanied by a retardation of vital combustion; but with exercise, by a mutual reaction, the circulation is stimulated in the capillaries by the activity of the muscles and the per-

ipheral heart, and reduces by its own work the work of the central organ.

But these are not the only benefits of muscular activity, for the muscles, as Paul Bert has shown, are oxygen-fixing agents. They are, properly speaking, respiratory organs; an extremely important interchange of the oxygen that is breathed in, and of the carbonic acid gas that is to be eliminated, takes place in them. Therefore, the more energetic the exchange, the more energetic also is the combustion of the fats of alimentation. Sitting still because it does not "burn up" the reserve fats, permits them to be deposited everywhere, and leads directly to obesity. These deposits are, however, not the only inconveniences of such bodily laziness, for it seems to be proven true that arthritis, gout, gravel, and bad breath have for their essential cause the products of incomplete combustion, due to deficiently energetic respiration. Further, this very important respiration of the muscles does not only last during work; the organs preserve a respiratory superactivity for a long time.

It must also be noted, that exercise is ab-

solutely indispensable for the majority of young people in good circumstances, who, as a rule, eat too much. Exercise, even violent exercise, is useful for them to burn the excess of ingested materials. If one eats a great deal and leads an inactive life, all the vessels which receive the chyle become congested. A sense of discomfort and aversion for food are frequently felt, especially in the morning, when the night's rest has aggravated this state of over-nutrition. The stomach then becomes lazy and the blood is literally "thickened;" that is to say, overburdened with materials which must be burnt. There is a peculiar condition which seems paradoxical that is often felt on waking: I mean the lassitude and torpor and mental indolence which comes from the accumulation of such residues. There is a crucial proof that this excess is undoubtedly the origin of such lassitude in the fact that if one has the courage resolutely to set one's self to work, it will diminish as soon as fatigue begins to be felt; that is to say, as soon as the excess of the accumulated materials in the blood diminish through oxidation.

To sum up, exercise provokes an active and energetic work of assimilation, a quickened movement of rich blood, and, on the other hand, a rapid elimination of the products of catabolism.

Beyond mentioning its general effect on the health, it is scarcely necessary to call attention to the very beneficial effects of walking on the peristaltic movements of the stomach.[1]

II

We have hitherto considered the value of exercise only from the point of view of the functions of nutrition. This is the point of view most essential to our subject, as the will and the attention are so intimately dependent on the state of our health. Muscular exercise

[1] As the usual attitude of the student is either in a sitting or standing position, the muscles which surround the abdominal viscera are generally in a state of relaxation. Their inactivity leaves them without any defense against the fatty deposits which increase the size of the abdomen, and still further they are no longer able to hold the stomach firmly in position, but allow it to dilate. M. Lagrange, in his admirable book, points out the effect that Swedish gymnastics have in correcting this state of things.

has, however, other relations which are less important, but much more intimately connected with the will. In fact, it is by muscular acts that the will begins to make its first timid advances in the child. The long apprenticeship necessary for each one of us before we can learn control of our movements, strengthens our will and disciplines our attention. Which of us has not been overcome by the feeling, perhaps is suffering from it at this very moment during a fit of utter laziness, that to make any especial movement, such as to get up or go out, etc., would require a very great effort of the will? And who, therefore, consequently can deny that muscular activity, or better, quick definite movements (for walking soon becomes purely automatic and has no value from this point of view) are not an excellent discipline for the will and the attention. This is so true, that muscular exercise is prescribed for neuropathic patients, who are incapable of fixing their attention. An effort implies an act of will, and the will develops, as do all our faculties, by repetition. Furthermore, muscular work becomes slightly painful as soon

as fatigue appears, and to be able to bear pain is one of the highest forms of the will.

It is, therefore, evident that exercise is directly and of itself like a primary school for the will.

Does this mean that it has no influence on the intelligence? Not at all! It has a very real influence. When we are in the throes of an attack of bodily laziness, our perceptions are scarcely awake; we obstinately stay at home and wrap ourselves in our gloomy, dreary feelings. We are bored and disgusted. Now this very unpleasant state of existence, of which we have all had some experience, only comes when the physical life is low in tone, and when ideas are hard to arouse in the absence of outside excitement. Such a state contrasts sharply with the clearness of our ideas and the exceeding vividness and richness of the impressions which come to us when we meditate while walking in the country. One can not, therefore, deny the great influence of exercise on our faculties.

III

The student ought, however, to look attentively at the egregious errors which are prevalent, concerning this physical exercise whose benefits we have been extolling. Health and muscular strength, which are two very different things, are often mistaken one for another. The essential thing in good health is vigor of the respiratory organs and the digestive apparatus. To be well means to digest well, to breathe deeply, and to have a strong, energetic circulation; furthermore, it includes the ability to stand variations in temperature without taking cold. But these qualities of resistance are in no way dependent upon muscular strength. A man may be an athlete in a circus, or able to do the heaviest porter work, and yet have very poor health, while another man who lives in his study may have an iron constitution with mediocre muscular power. Not only have we no reason to aspire to athletic strength, but rather we ought to avoid it; because it can only be developed by violent exercise and

such exercises not only interfere with the regularity of the respiration and cause very distinct congestion in the veins of the neck and brow, but they are undoubtedly weakening and exhausting. For it is impossible to put forth intense physical efforts and at the same time be capable of energetic mental efforts. Still further, the exhaustion brought on by these efforts predisposes the body to chills, such as are frequent among peasants and dwellers in the mountains.

To this we must add the fact that violent exercise is only useful when it is necessary to burn those nutritive reserves that come from overeating. Now, the worker who uses his attention energetically consumes as much and perhaps more material than the peasant who tills the earth, so that no student, worthy of the name, can be compared to the clerk sitting at his desk and performing the same task day in and day out, and whose intelligence is as lazy as his body. The more one works intellectually, the less one has need of excessive muscular exercise, in order to burn up the excess of unused materials.

It is curious how, in France, we praise the

athletic education which the young people in England receive, and admire it with that utter lack of discernment and total absence of scientific spirit which characterizes most public opinion. We seem to be dazzled by those great colleges where the board alone amounts to $1,000 a year, and by the amateur performances of the enormously rich sons of lords who attend these universities. We do not perceive that they are in the minority just as men of sport are in the minority with us. Intelligent Englishmen look disapprovingly upon this exaggeration of physical exercise in English schools. Wilkie Collins, in his preface to "Husband and Wife," written in 1871, shows an unfortunate development of coarseness and brutality in English society; and holds that the abuse of physical exercises has contributed largely to this condition. Matthew Arnold, whose impartiality no one would doubt, envies the French system of education. What, according to him, characterizes barbarian and Philistine, is that the first care only for social rank, for whatever satisfies their vanity, and for bodily exercise, sport, and noisy pleasures,

and that the second appreciate nothing but the excitement and bustle of business, the art of making money, their own comfort, and idle gossip. Therefore, according to his point of view, English education tends to increase the number of Philistines and barbarians. He very solemnly states "that purely intellectual workers are as moral as the pure athlete, but he should have added that in the Greek gymnasiums where physical exercise was most highly honored, it was considered highly dishonorable to indulge the passions. There is no intellectual worker among us who can not draw upon his own experience. We know that our capital of strength is not divided in two compartments by air-tight partitions, the compartment of cerebral forces and that of physical forces. All that we spend in excess in violent exercise is lost for mental work. If an imbecile, incapable of reflection, wants to stuff himself with food and wine, and then spend all the strength that remains from his digestion in fatiguing exercises, and if he contemplates his bulging muscles with pride, we do not see anything out of the way, but to propose such a life to

our future physicians and lawyers, our philosophers and our literary men, is nonsense. The great victories of humanity have never been gained with the muscles; they have been won by discoveries, by noble feelings, and living ideas; and we would exchange the muscles of 500 day laborers, or rather the perfectly useless muscles of all sporting men, for the powerful intelligence of a Pasteur, an Ampére or a Malebranche. Besides, the best trained men could never win a race against a horse nor even a dog; and a gorilla would not have the slightest fear of struggling with an athletic Hercules. Our superiority, therefore, does not lie in the weight of our muscles. As a proof of this, we have the fact that man has domesticated the most powerful animals, and that he cages tigers and lions to delight children who play in the public parks.

It is very apparent that the rôle of muscular strength must diminish day by day because the intelligence has replaced it by forces which are incomparably more powerful, viz.: machines. On the other hand it will be the fate of men, whose power lies in their

muscles, to be themselves treated more and more like machines. They are the docile instruments in the hands of those who think. An overseer who does not work directs the workmen, and the overseers are in their turn directed by an engineer whose hands bear no traces of work.

To sum up, the movement on foot to make athletes of our children is absurd. It rests on this confusion which exists between health and muscular strength. It tends to make our young men rough and restless, to the detriment of their intellectual power. Between the men who excel in debate, and those who excel in boxing, our choice does not hesitate for a moment. Do not let us consider this tendency to lead us on to develop our animal strength as a sign of progress. Putting one excess against the other, I would prefer those of the old schools which have given us Saint Thomas Aquinas, Montaigne, and Rabelais to those of the schools which give us champion oarsmen.

Frankly, if the flattery to their foolish vanity was taken away (foolish, because what is there to be vain about in possessing su-

perior forces that are inferior to those of many animals?), how many students would be willing to undergo the necessary fatigue to prepare for a rowing contest. We have come to the conclusion, therefore, that it is not England with her violent system of exercise which we ought to imitate in this connection, but rather Sweden who has completely given up such ruinous physical efforts for young people in her schools. There the object is to make young people strong and healthy, and they have perceived, that excessive physical exercises are more sure to lead to a breakdown than excessive study. It is therefore evident from what has gone before, that in the choice of exercises to be recommended to students, one absolute rule ought to be observed: these exercises ought not to be exhausting nor even go to the point of excessive fatigue.

IV

If so many errors and so many prejudices are current concerning physical exercise, the mistakes which are generally made, concerning intellectual work, are no less serious. It is always taken for granted that it is sedentary work. As we have said, the idea of intellectual work immediately calls up the picture of a man sitting with his head in his hands meditating, or his chest bowed over a table, writing. We repeat, no idea is more false; the preliminary work can, it is true, only be done at one's work-table. In order to translate, one must have a grammar and dictionary; when reading, one must concentrate the attention and fix certain memories in the mind by taking notes, and jotting down on paper the suggestions called forth by the author.

But once this first part of the work is done, all the work of memory properly so called, can not only be accomplished out of doors, but will gain much from being performed in the open country or in a park. Furthermore,

the work of memory and meditation and thinking over the plan for working up one's material, are all considerably facilitated by working in the open air. I confess, for my own part, that all the new ideas which have ever blest me by their appearance, have come to me during my walks. The Mediterranean, the Alps, or the forests of Loraine form the background of all my conceptions. And if it is true, as Herbert Spencer,[1] whom no one could ever suspect of laziness, states, "that the organization of knowledge is much more important than its acquisition," and if, as he said, "two things are necessary for this organization, time and the spontaneous work of thought," I maintain that this organization is never so vigorous as in the open country. *Quidquid conficio aut cogito, in ambulationis fere tempus confero.*[2] The movement of walking, the active circulation of thé blood, the pure, crisp air, which invigorates the body by its abundant supply of oxygen, gives a vigor and spontaneity to thought, which it rarely has in sedentary work. Mill relates in

[1] *Education.* F. Alcan. Paris, p. 294.

[2] Cicero, *Ad Quintil,* Chap. III.

his "Memoirs," that he composed a large part of his Logic, while walking to and fro between his office and the East Indian Company. So true it is, that constructive work may be carried on to a large extent in the open air and sunlight.

V

Now that we have discust the subject of exercise, it remains for us to speak of rest. Rest is not laziness. And still further, laziness is incompatible with rest. Rest, as a matter of course, implies previous work, and if not fatigue, at least the need of recuperation. No lazy man ever tastes the joys of well-earned rest, for if, as Pascal has said, it is a pleasure to be cold when one can warm one's self, then it is a pleasure to work when one can rest after it. Rest that has not been made necessary by work is nothing but idleness and brings with it intolerable boredom and *ennui*. As Ruskin has said, the most glorious rest is that of the chamois, crouched breathless on his granite bed, and not that of the ox in the stable munching its fodder.

The best of all rest is sleep. When it is calm and profound, it brings complete restoration of energy. A little while after waking, one feels a sense of well-being and upspringing energy for the day's work. Unfortunately, the question of sleep is one of those most burdened with false ideas. With their mania for laying down set rules for everything, and an authority which is all the more laughable, because their science is nothing but a mass of empirical laws, the hygienists limit the time required for sleep to six or seven hours. The only rule admittable here is a very general one, to have sense enough not to go to bed too late and to jump out of bed as soon as one wakes in the morning.

We say not to go to bed too late, because work that is prolonged until midnight is wholly to be condemned. It is a fact, that the temperature of the blood begins to lower toward four o'clock in the afternoon, and that the blood has a tendency to become loaded with the products of catabolism toward night. Intellectual effort is never very strong at this hour, and if it seems to

be in better form than it is in the daytime, I am very much afraid that it is because the tired mind is too easily contented with the mediocre quality of the work, which appears to be so brilliant.

Furthermore, intense mental application at night is fatal to sleep and causes excitement which is apt to make one's rest wholly insufficient. One can work one's self up into a sort of fever, at the time when everything should conduce to sleep; but what bad judgment that shows! The brain is merely overtaxed by mediocre work and the vigor and freshness of thought for the next day is spoiled. The most certain result of this absurd perversion of natural laws is increased irritability. All material work should be saved for the evening, such as making pencil notes in books, which one will read through again, or looking up passages to quote, or references.

As to work in the early morning, I also dispute its utility.

First of all, it is seldom that one has the energy to get up every morning at four o'clock. One must depend upon some other

assistance than that of the ever-feeble will, when it is the question, as in winter for example, of leaving the pleasant warmth of one's bed for the cold atmosphere of one's room. Once, in a town in the south of France, I had a room in the house of a baker, whose boys had orders to get me out of the bed in the morning, when they left work, and to use "brute force," in spite of my protestations. For a whole winter I was at my work-table at five o'clock. From this long experience I came to the conclusion, that in spite of the long time it took me to get accustomed to it, I nevertheless could always succeed by persevering. It was not long before my work became good, and everything that I learned I managed to learn thoroughly, and was a definite acquisition. But the rest of the day I was rather stupid and sleepy. And I concluded, in summing it all up, that it was better to use the working hours of the day than to attempt work so early in the morning. The only advantage of the method is that no day is lost; each one accomplishes some work, while if the work is put off until a free hour, there is danger, if one's will is weak, of frit-

tering away the time that should be used in effort.

It is most important, however, not to spend too much time in bed for two reasons. The first is because when one habitually lies in bed longer than the time necessary for rest, even tho that varies for each individual, sleep seems to "thicken the blood," the whole morning is spoiled, one is dull and indolent and opprest. One shivers easily and is impressionable. But this is not the most serious drawback of exaggerated rest; one may lay it down as an absolute rule, without exception, that every student who lies in bed very late, or who stays there for a long time after waking, invariably sinks into debilitating habits. Tell me how long you lie abed in the morning and I will tell you whether or not you are morally strong.

VI

Outside of sleep, rest takes the form of recreation. It is absolutely necessary not to work on uninterruptedly. The old comparison of the mind to the bow, which, always kept stretched, finally loosens its tension, is a good one. Work without its natural recompense, which is rest, degenerates into drudgery. Even for the assimilation of our acquisitions and for their development and growth in productiveness, it is necessary to allow some time to pass between the periods of work. Such rest is again pure and simply for the work itself; in fact, intellectual work can not go on without being accompanied by active work between nerve centers. Inversely, active work in the nerve centers is often found to further our intellectual researches even if this work is not performed consciously. It is no longer necessary to-day to defend the suggestive discovery of the corollation of ideas and of a "nervous substratum." For, when intellectual work ceases, the activity of the nerve centers does not immediately come to an end, the uncon-

scious work continues and, in fact, it is the fixing and development of memories from which its profit is derived.

Hence the foolishness of passing without a pause to a new piece of work. First, one loses the benefit of this spontaneous work which goes on in the subconscious regions of the mind, and, furthermore, it must to a certain extent go in opposition to the established blood currents and require them to establish a new plan. It is like stopping a train that is going at full speed, first slowing it down, and then switching it on to another track. It will be much better to let the naturally acquired enthusiasm expend itself naturally, by taking a little rest and a little exercise, and waiting until the calm should be reestablished in the cerebral circulation. In a long experience in teaching, I have often seen students, who could hardly keep up with their course, and who saw no relationship between any of their subjects, come back absolutely transformed after a fortnight's complete intellectual rest at the Easter vacation. A settling process had gone on in their thoughts, they had finally succeeded in organizing their ma-

terial, and they were complete masters of their subjects. Without this beneficial rest from new acquisitions nothing perhaps could have been accomplished by them.

There has never been enough said about the necessity of rest for work. How right Töpffer [1] is "You must work first, my friend, and then go out and see some one, take the air and stroll about, for that is the way to digest what you have learned and what you have observed, and to bind science to life instead of only binding it to your memory."

But one must not pursue rest as an end; it is not and ought not to be considered other than as a means to reanimate our energy.

All the same there are a great many ways of resting, and the choice of one's distractions should not be a matter of indifference to any one who wishes to strengthen his will. The essential characters of the right kind of distraction should be to quicken the circulation and the respiratory rhythm, and especially to provoke a thorough exercise of the muscles of the thorax and the vertebral column, and to rest the sight.

[1] Presbytère LI, 50.

One will see at once that these requisite conditions will cause us to give up absolutely, as having all the drawbacks of a sedentary employment and, furthermore, too often the drawbacks of a bad atmosphere, such games as cards and chess, and in fact all games which are played in such places where the air would be charged with tobacco smoke and seldom freshened.

On the other hand, taking walks in the country and little excursions into the woods fill the required program to a certain extent. Unfortunately, these pleasures do not satisfy all the required conditions, since they do not affect the muscles of the vertebral column, which control the respiration and those which surround the stomach. Nevertheless, they fill the lungs with pure air and rest the eyes pleasantly. Skating, which is the pleasantest of all exercises, and one with the greatest variety of movements, as well as swimming in summer, which is the most vigorous of respiratory exercises, have a marvelous power of refreshing the intellectual worker. To these may be added rowing, with the charming landscape along the shores, and

gardening, with the varied movements which it requires.[1]

In rainy weather billiards or carpentering are excellent occupations for the house. In the garden one can play ten-pins or skittles or at bowls, all of which are old French games, which neither croquet nor lawn tennis should supplant. During the holidays, nothing is of so much value as pleasant little trips with one's knapsack on one's back, into the Alps or the Pyrenees, in the Vosges or in Brittany. One must be careful, however, during the working months (in vacation this is no drawback), that when such exercise produces perspiration, one should not push it to the point of lassitude. Any fatigue is too much, for, when added to intellectual work, it becomes overstrain.

In addition to the immediate benefits of these distractions, the joy of healthy exercise has, like other light-hearted joyful emotions,

[1] We do not mention hunting here, as it is often exhausting and can never become an habitual exercise, nor fencing which induces nervous fatigue and is positively contraindicated for all men who work with the brain. See Lagrange, "L'Exercise chez les Adultes." F. Alcan, Paris, p. 299, et seq.

a very great hygienic value. It has been said that joy is the best health-giver; physical joy is like a chant of triumph of the well-balanced organism. And when to these animal joys there is added the keen satisfaction of intellectual work, which is not without its exclusive happiness—but which rather gives a freshness and savor to other pleasures—then happiness is complete. For the young people, who are sufficiently masters of themselves to regulate their life in this way, life is truly worth living: and to this company of the chosen, we may all belong if we know how to will it.

VII

To sum up, persevering energy of the will implies the ability to make long continued efforts. But without health, no such efforts are possible. Health is therefore an essential condition to moral energy. "No one may enter here who is not a geometrist," said Plato, and no one may enter here, we say emphatically, if he does not follow the laws of hygiene on the point on which they are firmly

established. In the same way that the will is built up of slight but frequently repeated efforts, by the foundation of good health is laid small hygienic precautions; precautions concerning one's food, fresh air, and circulation of the blood. It presupposes the thorough understanding of the value of rest and physical exercises. We have felt it necessary to speak very decidedly against the prevailing exaggeration of exercise in our thoughtless imitation of England. We have even pushed our scruples so far as to point out which are harmful pleasures and which are useful, according to the requirements we have laid down for profitable intellectual work, which are, that intelligence, sensibility, and the will depend very largely on the state of the body. If a soul, as Bossuet has said, is mistress of the body which she animates, she can not hold her sovereignty long if the body be worn out and weak. In such condition, we might be able to make an heroic effort, but it would not be possible to follow it immediately by others, for absolute exhaustion will be the natural consequence of the first. In life, such as civiliza-

tion has made it for us, the opportunities for heroic deeds are rare; so rare, that it is not for such that we prepare ourselves, but rather for those efforts of reiterated detail which must be repeated every day and hour. It will be found, however, that a will that has been tempered and trained by such perpetual efforts, will be better prepared than another for brave actions when the hour to accomplish such comes. But these repeated efforts in themselves are constancy and continuity of purpose, and it follows that when there is the power to persevere in effort there will also be a steady development of strength. One seldom stops to appreciate the wisdom of the ancients on this point, when they enunciated their famous maxim: *Mens sana in corpore sano.* Let us then be very careful to furnish our will with the requirements of physical energy, without which any effort, of any nature whatsoever, will shrivel up and never amount to anything.

V

A GENERAL GLANCE

We have now reached the end of the first part of our subject.

We first determined the nature of the enemies to combat in this most important and profitable struggle against our lower powers. We have learned that the passions are not of much importance in the struggle for the conquest of self, except as they aid and abet that arch-enemy, laziness, that force of inertia which tends unceasingly to drag man down to that level from which he has with so much difficulty climbed through centuries of effort. We have learned to understand that the term master of one's self can never be applied to any one who has an impulsive will. Supreme energy implies continued energy, prolonged during months and years, and the touchstone of the will is endurance.

Then, we have been obliged to get rid of two philosophical theories, each of which, to our way of thinking, was as discouraging as the other: the one pretends that we can do

nothing with our character, that it is predetermined and innate, that we are what we are, and that we can attempt nothing toward our own freedom: an absurd theory, and one which denotes so clearly the habit of thinking with words, and such an ignorance of the elementary facts of psychology, that one would be astonished to see it upheld by philosophers of distinction, if one did not appreciate the powerful suggestion which preconceived theories exercise upon the mind; a suggestion which, in fact, acts upon it as blinders do on a horse, preventing it from seeing the most manifest facts.

The other theory, that of free will, is no less naïve nor discouraging, in that it considers the reform of character as the work of an instant, and in that it has certainly prevented moralists from studying psychology. Nothing, however, but the most intimate knowledge of the laws of our nature, will enable us to find out the ways and means by which we can reform our characters.

With the road cleared of these two theories, we enter into the psychological study of our subject. We have spoken of the great

power that we have over our ideas, and of the feeble aid which they can give us directly, while we have almost no direct power over our sentiments which are all powerful over us. But fortunately, with the aid of time and discerning diplomacy, we can overcome all the difficulties, and by indirect methods can win a victory even when defeat seems certain. We have patiently studied these processes which give us the mastery of ourselves in the chapter on meditative reflection and action, and we have been obliged, by reason of the very close relations which exist between the physical and the moral, to examine in a chapter on hygiene these physiological conditions which are favorable to development of the will.

The purely theoretical part of our work is therefore finished. It now remains for us to come down to the practical part and to apply to the life of the student those great general laws which we have studied so far only in themselves. In other words, we must study from a little nearer point of view the exact dangers which threaten the moral autonomy of the student, and the aids which

he can find to protect himself, either within himself, or without.

We divide this second part, which is a practical treatise, into two books, Books IV and V.

Book IV has two main divisions, the one devoted to the enemies to combat (*pars destruens*), the other (*pars construens*) is a setting forth of the proper meditations, which will arouse in a young man a strong desire for a life of action which is wholly under the control of his will.

Book V passes in review the outside aids which the student may find for the education of his will in the society which surrounds him.

PRACTICAL SECTION

BOOK IV

PRIVATE MEDITATIONS

I

THE ENEMIES TO COMBAT: SENTIMENTAL DAY-DREAMS AND SENSUALITY

The enemies to combat are, as we have seen, two in number: sensuality and laziness. Laziness, being the perpetual letting go of self, constitutes the necessary "medium" for the development of all vicious germs; therefore, in a certain sense, all low passions imply laziness. If we were pushed a little further, we would not hesitate at all to state, as the Stoics did, that all base passions are due to weakness of the will. What is it to be passionate if it is not to cease to be master of one's self? Passion is the animal nature victorious; it is the blind tendencies of heredity which obscure and oppress our intelligence, and still further debase it to their own ends; it is the suppression of humanity in us, the lowering of what is both our honor and our very reason for existence. While it is raging we retrograde several steps in the zoological series.

Nevertheless, the passions are less danger-

ous, on account of their short duration, than those forces which are permanently harmful, and which we have compared to the force of gravity. And in the same way that a building is safe only when the architect has built the walls with due regard to the law of pressure, so the work of our own regeneration will be lasting only when we have been able to neutralize the action of hostile forces by opposing them with a victorious array of forces that are favorable to our end, and when we have even succeeded in winning some of these hostile forces to fight for us. But how shall we be able at the first glance to get some sort of an idea whether a force is for us or against us? Nothing is more simple. Every psychological force is dangerous to our will if it encourages our laziness, but helpful if it acts in the opposite direction.

The work that we must undertake, therefore, stands out very distinctly. The first thing to do is to weaken, or as far as possible destroy, all the forces which tend to undermine our energy, and to give the greatest possible vigor to those which tend to strengthen it.

There are many things which tend to weaken the persevering will. The first in importance is that sentimental day-dreaming which so many young people indulge in, and which insensibly leads the imagination to take pleasure in voluptuous reveries which are the most common cause of deplorable personal habits. Next in order comes the baneful personal influence of companions who have ceased to make any effort to improve themselves, the life of the club and restaurant and the depression and discouragement of the formidable array of sophisms with which the lazy seek to excuse their slothfulness; sophisms which are so often repeated that they get themselves accepted even by enlightened people, and finally acquire the authority and weight of axioms, and deadly axioms they are!

We shall begin the study of psychological facts which are detrimental to the will by examining sentimental day-dreams and vague aspirations.

In the undergraduate courses in college life the young man, held in restraint by the rules of his house, and occupied by numerous

obligatory duties, and kept in working order by his desire to excel, as well as the pressure of examinations, is obliged to lead a strictly sober and well-regulated life, and has scarcely any time to give himself up to prolonged day-dreaming, at least not at the present day, when the hours of study have been shortened, and those for recreation increased. He can hardly do now, as alas! nearly all the resident students used to do, devote the major part of his study hours in the evening to building castles in the air, and imagining scenes of tender passion. But on leaving college to begin professional studies, where he is thrown suddenly alone into the midst of city life, without relatives or any supervision, without obligatory studies for certain hours, without even any definite set work, the student finds that the hours which he fritters away in doing what he pleases, or yielding to his weaknesses, or in absolute laziness, are constantly increasing in number. Unfortunately, at this very period, certain physiological changes which have been going on for a long time are now completed. His development is almost mature. The enor-

mous effort of the child to classify and solve the problems of his immediate world is ended: but numerous forces that have as yet been put to no use begin to cause him trouble. The awakening of the senses all at once tinges his thoughts with reflections that they did not have before. Imagination begins to work. It is this state of genuine suffering, which is rendered poetic in literature, that Beaumarchais has so skilfully depicted, in his Cherubim. He is not in love with any particular woman, he is still "in love with love." At this age we have such power of transfiguration, such superabounding vigor in life, such need of lavishing our affections on some object, or devoting ourselves to some cause, or making some sacrifice, that it is truly a blessed state.

But alas! it is a critical moment in life. This ardor must find an outlet. If it is not directed toward honorable occupations, there is danger that it will rush impetuously toward low and shameful pleasures. It is at this time that the Herculean struggle between vice and virtue begins. Whichever side be chosen, it will be passionately and vehe-

mently supported. For the great majority of young people there is no question about their choice. They go in the direction in which they are borne along by their distaste for study, the example of bad companionship, the lack of healthful recreations, the weakness of their wills and their imaginations, which have already become indecent or corrupt. Of such it is incorrect to say that they have given up the battle, for they never for a moment attempted to struggle. It must, however, be admitted that the delightful romances which flit through their imaginations, and the future which they plan to please their fancy, are infinitely more interesting than work, and require far less effort. As soon, therefore, as a study becomes wearisome the student begins to reason that he can just as well put his work off till to-morrow, which, as a matter of fact, he always does. He then lets himself go, and indulges in day-dreams which absorb the best part of his time. How many young men there are who are living in some sort of romance, made up bit by bit during weeks and weeks, varying the theme in a hundred different ways,

imagining their heroine in every possible situation, even addressing her aloud in words which they can never make too tender, too sweet, or too ardent! Ah, how pale and colorless the passions of our novelists are compared with our own romances at eighteen! Their plots and their characters lack that richness of affection and disinterested generosity which is the glory of this privileged age. It is not until later when our imagination has been crowded out by serious affairs, and has become cold and inert, that we turn to the novelist and ask him to take the place of the poet we once were, but are no more. The unfortunate thing about these tender romances is that they are built up in the hours which ought to be given to work, and too often young men get into such a habit of day-dreaming that they find it impossible to do any serious work. Some word that they read, some slight suggestion, and it is enough to carry them far away from their work. An hour has slipt away before they get hold of themselves again. And what is more, the contrast between his dreams and the solitary life of a lonely student shut up in his room,

is such that his work, which often seems tiresome to him, becomes so bitter that he loses courage altogether. It is so hard to come down from the enchanted heaven to the prosaic reality of life! In every way day-dreams are harmful. Too many precious hours which should have been given to work are consumed in this useless and profitless fashion!

This squandering of the intelligence and sentiment comes from superficial causes, chiefly from an unregulated imagination, but unfortunately it has also more profound causes.

One very important cause is the physiological transformation of which we have spoken. This is the approach of manhood, and also the very wide step that lies between the physical capacity and the corresponding social capacity.

From the end of his preliminary studies, a young man has to work for eight or ten years in order to attain a position which will justify him in making a "suitable" marriage. In France they admit that a young girl must "buy" her husband, and few are the young

men who dare to approach a dowerless marriage and depend on their youth and vigor and courage to attain a competency. They prefer to wait and often make a bad bargain: for, unfortunately, the dowry does not go without the bride, and too often money can not compensate for poor health, extravagant tastes, inability to manage a home, and for the annoyances which arise for the wife as well as for the husband, through the idleness of the former.

With the present social customs, in France at least, a student can not marry before thirty years of age, so that the ten best years of life pass either in a painful struggle against one's physiological needs, or else in vice. For the men are rare who keep up the struggle, and the majority of students dissipate their youth in a low, foolish demoralizing life.

It is sad to count up the number of misfortunes caused by this pernicious custom of late marriages. How much joy, health and energy is foolishly squandered. For altho marriage may have its inconveniences and impose heavy burdens, yet it brings them at

an age when one is able to bear them easily. The necessary efforts that must be put forth to make a living for those that belong to him are at least not wholly selfish efforts; it is a healthful and manly discipline for a young man to work for others. Furthermore, if marriage without a dowry has its drawbacks, it also has great moral advantages. The husband and the wife feel a mutual responsibility. It is of primary importance for the wife to give her husband the benefit of her best intelligence by looking closely after his health. She does not delegate the preparation of his meals to a careless servant. The various dishes are to her as notes upon the keyboard which she has studied, and on which she plays skilfully, knowing the effect that each will have upon the health of the one who is everything to her. The husband for his part feels that he has the care of other lives. He must guard against the chance of death by insuring his life. When he goes to his business in the morning he leaves at home a happy-hearted contented wife, who is full of health and vigor. He knows that when he returns he will find an

affectionate welcome and sympathy for any disappointments he may have had. He knows that he will find his house neat and clean and with that festive air which belongs to happy homes. There is no more strength-giving sentiment for a young man than that which is built up by this association of two persons of good sense and courage against misfortune and disease. As they advance in life their affection and happiness increase: the work of the one and the economy of the other enable them to adorn their home. Each jewel that is bought, each new piece of furniture is the result of the sacrifice of all pleasures and joys which are not held in common; this, without mentioning children, creates a bond of extraordinary force. In the homes which have started out modestly the comforts increase with age, and the cares diminish, and old age is perfectly happy because it enjoys security, tranquillity, and wealth only after having worked a long time to obtain them. As the poet has truly said:

The only wealth a man enjoys for long without remorse
Is that which he himself has earned which cost him time and force.[1]

[1] Sully Prudhomme. "Le Bonheur."

One ought not, then, to hesitate to marry young, for altho that is possible only by giving up the idea of a large dowry, in France at least, yet one will have the advantage of choosing a woman for her good qualities. It must also be admitted that the young girls whom our professional men would marry later are less and less fitted to marry. The hot-house education which they have received, the lack of fresh air and exercise, and their habit of wearing tight corsets too frequently renders them unfit to bear the strain of maternity. Very few have either the courage or the strength to nurse their children. Physicians agree that deficiencies in this direction are all too frequent.

The absolute indolence in which they spend their time after leaving boarding school, the excellent food which they receive, and the absence of all fatigue, the excitement of the evening entertainments to which they are taken, the opera, the perusal of the sentimental novels which they are permitted to read, and which appear in the young ladies' journals or fashion papers, all combine together to make it impossible for their imagination

not to be perverted. One can have no idea of how little the indolent society girl knows of the suffering of the world.

Furthermore, brought up, as it were, on the outskirts of life and seeing nothing but the refinements and politeness of social intercourse, and having, besides, no question but that the morrow will be provided for, they know nothing of the realities of life, and when these surge up through their conventional ideas of propriety, they are terribly disillusioned. They have as a rule less common sense than the young girls of the families of the working classes.

But, you will say, young girls of wealth have at least the advantage of the best education. Alas! there are many illusions concerning this. They hardly ever attain real culture. They can fill their memories full of a variety of things, but do not expect any efforts of creative imagination from them. It is very hard to find any "personality" among them, and M. Manuel, the inspector-general, and for many years president of the Board of Examiners of Young Women, stated this fact in several of his reports.

However true this may be of them, when we Frenchmen marry them, we are so far ahead of them that they never appear to their husbands, especially if the husband is a thinker and a worker, as anything more than mediocre students. But even without a superior education, a wife with good sense, sound judgment and keen observation is infinitely more helpful to a man of talent. He lives, in fact, and more and more, as time goes on, above the human plane. He perseveringly keeps up his pursuit of ideas, and finally loses all touch with the surrounding world. The wife, however, lives wholly in the world. She is able to gather a rich harvest of observations which the husband, ignoring details, has never perceived; she establishes a bond between the world and him. She sometimes draws in at a single cast of her net, a miraculous catch of fishes, precious bits of information, of which the husband sees the general import. Stuart Mill constantly spoke in extremely eulogistic terms of Mrs. Taylor; while his friends, and principally Bain, declared that she had a very ordinary mind.[1]

[1] Bain, Stuart Mill, "A Criticism." London, 1882, p. 163.

They did not understand, that for a thinker like Mill, wholly wrapt up in abstractions, Mrs. Taylor, if she was a close observer, and was discerning in her judgment, must have furnished him, as Mill declared she did, material for some of his greatest theories in economics, for in his "Political Economy" Mill constantly praises the eminently practical minds of women, and their genius for detail. This was the great influence of Mrs. Taylor, and as a like incentive, a woman with the gift of observation, a little matter of fact, but discerning, is more precious to the thinker than a whole harem full of blue stockings.[1]

But however soon a young man, whose life is to be spent in intellectual work, is able to marry, as he can not do so immediately on leaving school or college, there will still remain several years in which he must struggle

[1] "Women," says Schopenhauer, "are afflicted with intellectual myopia which permits them to see, as if it were by a sort of intuition, everything that lies close to them, with the greatest distinctness. . . . While with us, on the other hand, our glance never stops to rest on the things under our very eyes, but passes on, seeking for something far beyond. We need to be taught to see things more directly, and more quickly."

to free himself from the bondage of his physical cravings. The struggle is wholly an affair of tactics, ways and means. If it is not handled properly, defeat is certain.

II

We need not be afraid to approach such an important subject as sensuality in a book that is written for young people between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five. Not to speak of a thing from which the noblest spirits of humanity have suffered would be out-and-out hypocrisy. Kant has a page on this subject which is rendered in the French translation by several lines of dots. These dots speak eloquently of the attitude of public opinion on this question; but when one remembers the lack of delicacy in the after-dinner stories of well-bred men over their cigars, it would be foolish to take this modesty for the genuine hall-marked article when it is only a counterfeit, and not to dare to say what is plainly the duty of some man of spirit to say.

It is only too true that the idle day-dreams of puberty soon pass over into sensuality.

The indistinct visions become more definite, vague desires become acts and the student either gives himself up to secret habits, or else as the majority of young men do, if they are a little bolder, or have more money, seeks the women who professionally sell themselves.

The consequences of this state of things are, as a rule, so exaggerated that the overdrawn picture frightens nobody. It is, however, none the less true that the health is seriously impaired by such excesses; the young people who commit them get an oldish look. They have a feeling of weakness in the back, muscular debility, and a sensation of pressure in the spinal cord, slight symptoms which pass unnoticed in the excitement of physical animal exuberance. They lose their color and freshness, their eyes look dull and heavy, and have dark rings under them. Their faces have a deprest look. Everything indicates a fatigue which, if frequently experienced, soon saps the very springs of life; it, to a certain extent, prepares the way for gastralgias, neuralgias, hypertrophy of the heart and weakness of sight, all of which begin at about thirty years of age to make life

miserable for those who have not been keen enough to foresee the consequences of indulgence. But the body is not the only thing to feel the disastrous influence of sensuality, the memory becomes astonishingly weak, and the mind loses all its buoyancy and vigor. It begins to feel dull and to move sluggishly, as if overcome by torpor. The attention is weak and wandering. The days slip by in apathetic indifference, accompanied by a feeling of listlessness and disheartening laziness. Above all, there is that loss of virile joy in work, and it becomes a bore the moment it lacks its material recompense.

Finally, the habit of physical pleasure substitutes coarser and more violent emotions for the gentler but more lasting emotions of the mind. Their excitement and agitation destroy the joy that is to be found in calmer pleasures. And as sensual pleasures are short in duration, and are followed by fatigue and disgust, the character becomes habitually despondent and morose, with a sense of depression which drives one to find relief in violent, boisterous, brutal pleasures. It is a discouragingly vicious circle.

It is not necessary to add to this picture, which is by no means overdrawn, the social consequences of debauchery which are so deplorable for the women of a society like that of France, which we may consider is still half barbarous, as it guarantees young men of the leisure classes immunity from social ostracism even in seduction.

The causes of sensuality are very numerous. We have seen that one of them, however, is organic. In the same way that the appeal which the stomach makes to consciousness, takes the form of that discomfort known as hunger, and as the feeling of suffocation produced when air can not reach the lungs is the cry of the respiratory organs for relief, so in the same way when the seminal fluid accumulates, there is a brutal imperious demand which, in some inexplicable way, disturbs the regular workings of the mind, so long as its desire is not satisfied.

However, it is not a case here, as it is with hunger, of suffering from a lack of anything, but rather suffering from plethora or excess. There is a superabundance of energy to be spent. But in physiology, as in a budget of

expenses, it is possible to make a clean sweep of the surplus by writing the unused funds under different headings.

There is a system of equivalences in which, whatever may be the origin of the super-abundant force, the balance will be wiped out by fatigue of some sort.

If only the desire would remain the same the struggle against it, and its demands, would be easy. But it acts at times as if it were whipt up, and stimulated by many causes, which sometimes transforms the desire into a perfect outburst of furious madness, which even leads one to commit wild or criminal deeds.

The first cause of this over-stimulation lies in our dietary régime. We have already seen that most of us eat too much. Our food is both too abundant and too rich; as Tolstoi[1] says, we eat like stallions. Look at these students leaving the table, with red, congested faces, loud voices and noisy mirth, and tell me whether you think it will be possible for them to do any intellectual work while the difficult process of digestion is going on, and

[1] "Kreutzer Sonata."

whether the purely animal side of their nature is not in the ascendent.

Add to this cause of stimulation the hours of sitting still in the lecture-room where the air is often warm, or in the heavy close atmosphere of the cafés. Still further, add to this the habit of over-sleeping, which is a certain means of exciting sensuality. We say certain, because, in the drowsy indolent state that follows waking in the morning, the will seems to melt away, the creature element in us reigns supreme; the mind itself is somnolent, and tho it may seem to many people as tho the thoughts that come to them in their half-waking hours are very remarkable, yet they deceive themselves. The critical sharpness of the mind is dulled, and the most inane ideas appear strikingly original. But when they come to write down these brilliant morning thoughts, they will perceive that they really accomplished nothing, their imagined mental work was worthless automatism.

In automatism, indeed, and the automaton in us, is the unleashed animal with its instincts and desires; and its natural tendency, the object of its existence, is sensual pleasure.

This is so true that we can lay it down as a rule without any exception that the young man who lies in bed from one to several hours after waking is unquestionably depraved.

To these causes of a physical nature must be added the temptation of environment. The company of ordinary companions without character, energy, or moral perception can not be otherwise than harmful. And unfortunately, it must be admitted that among the students in any country there must always be a considerable number of "ne'er-do-weels." They incite a spirit of foolish, extravagant emulation in their circle, and the biggest fools set the pace for the others. In the restaurants, especially, at the numerous tables occupied by little cliques, the meals are noisy, the students grow heated over ridiculous and unprofitable discussions. They come out from this over-excitement quite ready to follow any of the indecent suggestions of their comrades. They hasten off to the beer saloons, and the orgy begins. After so much violent excitement, it takes a long time to return to quiet work, and the more refined joys of the spirit. These debauches leave behind

them something which acts as a bad ferment, disorganizing those nobler emotions which, in a young man, are so easily disturbed.

If, however, these were the only causes of depravity, young men of straightforward, good, honest natures, could avoid them; but unfortunately there are other suggestions of a higher order, and popular sophisms accepted by everybody which legitimize the worst excesses.

In the psychological part of this book we studied the relation of the natural tendencies to the intelligence.

In itself blind, the tendency is definitely directed by the intelligence, and from the moment that it becomes conscious of its direction and the means by which it shall act, its power is doubled. On the other hand, the tendency attracts in some way, and groups around it ideas of a like nature; it lends them its strength, and in turn derives increased power from them. It is a close union; even more than that, it is a solidarity of such a nature that anything which weakens one of the parties concerned weakens the other, and whatever strengthens one strengthens the

other. This is particularly true of all tendencies of a sexual nature. The images conjured up along these lines have a very considerable power of realization. They react with astonishing rapidity upon the reproductive organs. When the feeling is excited, it completely invades the intelligence and tends to produce a violent suggestion that almost becomes an hallucination; inversely no tendency is more easily awakened by ideas or mental pictures. The rôle of the imagination is so great in the passion of love, that no words could exaggerate it. In an idle mind especially, one might say that the automatic part of thought has this kind of desire for its chief object. And the proof of this is that love only becomes the dominant business of people in court life, or "in society," because worldly people live in the most deplorable idleness. To people who are busy with their work, it is only what it should be normally.

It is also a very great misfortune that in such a difficult struggle, the student, instead of being helped and encouraged by the environment in which he lives, is met on every hand by excitement and stimulation. The

slightest accident may break the frail helm of his rudder, and deliver his soul over to the automatism of passion. The mind of a young man is like the sea in March, never calm, and altho it may appear to be so, an attentive examination will reveal a slow underswell which the slightest wind would transform into mighty billows. It is of the greatest importance, therefore, to avoid anything that would raise even a momentary storm. But how can one do that when one lives in the midst of a society and surrounded by a literature that abounds in excitement. The very atmosphere that a young man breathes is enervating. Everything around him seems to combine to disturb his powers of discernment concerning the pleasures of love. He is only too well aware of the fact that the large majority of "well bred" people are strangers to artistic and intellectual pleasures, and also that they are often incapable of any deep or lasting enjoyment of the beauties of nature. Sensual pleasures, which are accessible, not only to man, but to nearly all the animals, demand no prolonged sacrifices, they are easily obtained, and soon the

more delicate tastes disappear, and one is incapable of any pleasures save those of a grosser nature.

The result of this general state of affairs is that social reunions are often the occasions of purely sensual excitation under the mask of various pretexts, music, theatricals, etc. The young man, who, on his return from an evening entertainment, goes back to his modest student quarters, enters them with imagination much disturbed. The contrast between the lights, the dancing, and the suggestive toilets, and his poor workroom, is deadly to his peace of mind. There is no more discouraging impression for him, for he has not yet acquired the habit of criticizing these pretended pleasures. It has never penetrated his mind that, rich as he is in strength and in illusions, he is incapable of perceiving what he is. He conjures up a world out of everything he has experienced, and peoples it with personages whom he moves about at will. His illusion is so real that it comes between him and the reality which it hides. It is not to be wondered at if by contrast his calm, tranquil, free and truly happy life seems to him un-

bearably lonely and monotonous. It never occurs to the poor fellow to look within for comfort. Nothing in his previous education has forewarned him of these dangers. Quite the contrary! The literature of the day is largely a glorification of the sexual act. If we were to believe many of our novelists, and many of the most celebrated poets of France, the noblest achievement which is offered to a human being, is the satisfaction of an instinct which we have in common with the animals! It is no longer our mental powers, or our actions in which we should take pride, but rather a physiological necessity. "The thing that Carlyle criticized most strongly in Thackeray, is that he depicted love after the French fashion, as extending through our entire existence and constituting its chief interest; while love, on the contrary (or the passion that is called love), is limited to a very few years of man's life, and even in this insignificant fraction of time, it is only one of the objects in which man is interested, among a host of others which are infinitely more important. "To tell the truth, the whole affair of love is such a miserable trifle, that

in an heroic epoch no one would spare it even a thought, much less speak about it."[1]

Then Manzoni[2] "I am," says he, "one of those who hold that we ought not to speak of passionate love in such a way as to incline the minds of our readers toward it. . . . Such love is necessary in this world, but there will always be enough of it, it is really not necessary to take the trouble to cultivate it, for by attempting to cultivate it, *one does nothing more than to provoke it in places where there is no necessity for it.* There are other sentiments of which morality stands in need, and which a writer should, according to his ability, instil more and more deeply into the soul, such as pity, the love of one's neighbor, gentleness, forgiveness, and the spirit of sacrifice."

These words of Carlyle and Manzoni are among the most sensible that have ever been written on this important subject. In addition to the absurd tendency of literature to cater to the public, that is to say, rather the

[1] Quoted by Mrs. Carlyle.

[2] Quoted by Bonghi, in "Revue des Deux Mondes." July 15, 1893, p. 359.

literature of the second rank, there are a great many sophisms in current use, which disarm the student from the start in his attempts at mastering himself. Physicians are largely responsible for these sophisms. They utter them in that decisive tone, and with that absolute faith with which many of them are accustomed to set forth as indubitable axioms, propositions based upon perfectly childish arguments.

In the first place they quote the example of the animals, calling upon the entire series to prove the natural necessity which accompanies these physical functions. As if the long periods of intermittance of the function in the majority of animals were not against the argument, and as if on the other hand the honor of mankind did not consist in this very thing of knowing how to free one's self from one's purely animal needs. What, moreover, can be a necessity which so many men have learned to do without? Has not one a right to be astonished when one reads in the works of a celebrated physician, "the passion of love holds the most important place in life—when one reaches a certain age, when the

only hope one can entertain is not to descend the path that leads to old age too quickly, then one recognizes that all is vanity save love." Physical love is, of course, understood, for it is the chief subject of discussion in the chapter. What! do all intellectual and artistic joys, the love of nature, the effort to mitigate the misery of the poor and the outcasts of society, the love of one's family and one's neighbor, count for nothing, and would one exchange all these pleasures for a few moments' enjoyment of a spasm which one has in common with the animals?

If Renan himself had uttered such words, we would have understood it, for this great stylist never brought his studies to bear on purely humane interests. His hypocritical optimism, an external sign of a mind which after all was mediocre, would have found nothing repelling in such ideas. But that a physician who is every day grappling with the problem of human suffering, and who, every day, must see men die, should express such an opinion is amazing. But yet again, if that were the supreme end of human life, why should senile amours appear so despic-

able? And what, should we say, would be the existence of old men, who, by their age, are put without the pale of humanity, or rather animality? We must frankly admit that such axioms are low and ignoble, and as they denote such a pitiful and false point of view of life in those who utter them, we are stunned to meet them in scientific men, who ought to know how to draw logical deductions.

Let us examine our whole existence and the existence of others. Is it not evident that with the great majority of peasants, working folk, and people who lead a healthy, active life, who do not eat to the point of indigestion every day, nor spend twelve hours in bed, passion, as Carlyle exprest it, is merely an *hors-d'œuvre*. Let the idle be what they are, we know what they are, for the journals and books that are meant to excite them are written for them. But how hard is their punishment! When they reach the age when such satisfactions are denied them, life becomes tame and loses all its interest. They present the ridiculous and repellent spectacle of impotent old libertines. What an absurd statement it would be to say that there is no

other occupation for an old man than to take delight in sensual images. Would it not be a hundred times better to be able to congratulate himself, as Cicero did, upon having escaped becoming a slave to his passions, and to devote himself to politics, art, science, and philosophy?

The stupid idea that passion is the whole of life is often accompanied by monstrous sophisms. It is said that chastity is detrimental to health! It has, however, never been noted that in those religious orders where chastity is the absolute rule, that disease is more rampant than where prostitution is the order. If a young man were shut up in a room without books, or without any possible occupation, it is perfectly certain that the sensual suggestions would become irresistible, and would produce serious disturbances, not of the health, but of the mind. But to an active, energetic young man, the suggestion never becomes incoercible.

Then again, it is possible to go on a wholly different tack, and apply one's self to work which will quickly get the better of the desire. On the other hand, the problematic

dangers of continence are as nothing compared to the consequences of excess in the opposite direction. When in Paris alone, there are two hospitals for diseases of this origin, when every year the number of people attacked with softening of the brain, and locomotor ataxia, in consequence of their excesses is increasing, it is laughable, to say the least, to find the author of an enormous book on hygiene, of 1,500 pages, announce that continence undermines the health!

Is it not evident that venereal excesses are detrimental, and that on the contrary continence gives intelligence, vigor, and an abundance of healthy energy to the whole organism? Moreover, does the method of triumphing over our appetites consist of giving in to them altogether? The very beginners in psychology themselves, know that the essential characteristics of any appetite is a sort of insatiability, which grows more and more exacting, the more one gives in to it. This is a curious way to check the presumption of the enemy, to beat a retreat the moment he shows his face. But, above all, it is a proof of the greatest ignorance of self, to

expect to master the sexual appetites by concessions. To give in here is not to appease, but to stimulate them. The only way to master sensuality is to struggle against it with every means at one's command. But let us leave these medical theories, they are so naïve and childish that they only furnish fresh proof of the radical lack in the studies of logic, psychology, and morals in the course of the majority of students of medicine.

The desire, therefore, is the thing against which we must struggle. It is true that victory is difficult. It is the supreme triumph in the mastery of self. When it is the custom to sneer at the purity of a young man of twenty years of age, when debauchery is looked upon as a proof of virility, is it not marvelous to think of what a complete reversal of things can be effected by language, and by a few cheap formulas? Does not the possession of the force of all forces, pure energy—the liberated and victorious will—mean that we must retain the mastery in the struggle against this powerful instinct? Manhood lies here, not elsewhere; it lies in this mastery of self, and the Church is right in

considering chastity as the supreme guarantee of the energy of the will—an energy which in its turn guarantees for the priest the possibility of all other sacrifices.

But altho this triumph is possible, it is not easy. There, as elsewhere, the more the conquest is to be desired, the greater must be the expenditure of effort and persevering skill. The remedies are as varied as the causes.

It is first necessary to combat the immediately predisposing causes. One must regulate one's sleep most rigorously, not to go to bed until one is tired, and to get up the moment one awakes. One should avoid a soft bed, that tempts one to laziness in the morning. If our will is too feeble to make us spring out of bed the moment we awake, then we must have recourse to some person who has no hesitation in assuming the responsibility of waking us up in spite of our protestations.

Furthermore, the student must watch his diet, and avoid heating dishes, a great quantity of meat and strong wine, with which he should have nothing to do at his age. The best thing for him to do would be to choose a

lodging at some distance from the lecture-rooms, a quiet, cheerful room with plenty of air and sunlight, and often to eat some easily prepared dish at home. He ought to avoid sitting still for too long at a time; he should keep the air in his room fresh, and at a moderate temperature. He ought to go out every evening, while meditating on his work for the morrow, and walk until he feels tired, then go straight to bed. These walks he should take as a regular habit, no matter what the weather may be, for, as an English humorist has remarked, the rain always falls much more heavily, and the weather is much worse to him who looks down into the street from the windows of his room than for him who is not afraid to go out into it.

For the young men who live on a moderate diet, and who follow the laws of wise hygiene, physical excitements of this nature are neither frequent nor difficult to dismiss; and the struggle against sensuality will not be difficult if the stimulation that comes from the intellect does not bring any definite images to the support of the physical suggestion, or draw the attention to dwell on it.

We have now studied at some length the close relationship existing between the intelligence and the passions. Passion, which in the nature of things is blind, can do nothing without the help of the intelligence, but it succeeds in winning the intelligence to be its accomplice. Passion can stir up, and use for its own end a perfect torrent of ideas, and their accompanying feelings, to which even the most seasoned will can offer no resistance. One must therefore be on guard to prevent one's thoughts from lending their assistance. As a general rule, it is dangerous to try to struggle against sensuality. The very fact of turning our attention to it, even for the purpose of combating it, serves to strengthen it. Courage here means flight. We must resort to stratagem in our battle. To attack the enemy from the front is to rush to defeat. While the most brilliant intellectual conquests are achieved by thinking of one subject all the time, the victory over sensuality is won by *not thinking about it at all.* One must at any cost prevent the union of ideas with a newly born temptation, and the gradual awakening of sensual images which are

still lying dormant. One must avoid reading romances, and, above all, journals or books which have indecent suggestions. There are some pages in Diderot's works which produce the same effect as if one had taken a dose of some violent aphrodisiac. One must avoid looking at obscene pictures or illustrations which are even more upsetting to the tranquillity of the spirit than written descriptions. One must avoid the society of lewd companions; one must foresee the possibility of danger in trifling details so that one can never be caught unaware by temptation. At first a simple thought, as yet wholly powerless, steals into the mind. If one is on one's guard at this juncture nothing is easier than to put the importunate visitor out, but if one begins to form definite mental pictures, and if one takes pleasure in building them up, and experiences a feeling of satisfaction in them, it is too late.

This is the reason why mental work is the sovereign remedy. When the mind is busily occupied, the timid solicitations of passion are checked in their helpless state, on the threshold of consciousness. No audience is

granted to them. They have no chance to enter, except when the mind is empty. This is, in fact, all the more true because we hold that laziness is the mother of vice. The temptation gains entrance in moments of revery or when the mind is unoccupied. When the attention is brought to bear on it, it becomes definite and more strong. Memories gradually awaken, and the forces of the animal nature are ready to become organized the moment the rational will abdicates, and leaves the field free to the brute powers.

We may also say without fear of making a mistake, that the idle and lazy are almost habitually enslaved by their sensuality; not only because the emptiness of their minds leaves consciousness open, as it were, to sexual suggestions, but also because a man, especially a young man, needs pleasure and stimulating experiences—and when he does not seek such pleasure or stimulation in intellectual work, or in healthy, robust amusements, it is fatal if he demands still more intense and violent experiences such as are furnished by vicious habits or debauchery.

This is why it is not enough simply to have

the mind occupied in order to withstand sexual passion—such occupation must carry with it a feeling of pleasure, and the joy of productive work. Desultory or too diversified work, with the attention distracted by a great variety of objects, brings no joy, but, on the contrary, a feeling of irritation and discontent with one's self. Regular methodical work alone can bring powerful interest to the mind, an interest that will *continue* and *last*. It brings the same sort of joy that the mountain climber feels when he sees that through his own energy the summit which he wishes to reach becomes nearer every moment. It alone can fortify the mind with a granite rampart against the invasion of sexual suggestions. If one combines energetic habits with such joyous work, and if one learns to seek the pleasures which we have enumerated above, the only thing that remains to insure one's safety is to furnish adequate satisfaction to those vague aspirations which are awakened at puberty. Nothing is easier at those happy years which stretch from eighteen to twenty-five than to become enamored of nature, of the mountains, the woods, the

sea, and to love, even to the point of passion, everything that is noble, fine and inspiring; the arts, literature, science, history, without mentioning the new possibilities which are constantly offering themselves for work along social lines. How well a young man who followed such a program would be paid for his work. His increased vigor, and keener intelligence, and his cultivated sympathies would make his life worthy of envy. Even his failures, because of his ability to palliate their bitterness, will in no way detract from his manly dignity, for he will be able to recover himself, and resolutely resume the struggle. Absolute victory is hardly possible, but it is counted as victory in this combat not to be conquered too often, and never to lose heart.

III

The two forms in which sensuality expresses itself in the life of the student must now be studied at closer range. We have already stated that the standard of sexual morality among students is far from high, and

this comes from the fact that they are often left alone in a large city without any proper supervision. Moreover, a great many of them lose the freshness of their spirits and dissipate their best energies in vulgar excess. Nobody warns them; and intoxicated as they are, with their new freedom, it is a long time before they can get rid of the illusions on which they have based their ideas of life. Nobody has ever made them stop to think about the nature of their pleasures; and that is why it is so long before they begin to suspect the important part that *vanity* plays in all their indulgences.

The companions whom they meet in the restaurants are not in a position to enlighten them. Many of them have mistresses, and partly because they are duped themselves, and partly because they want to show off, they exaggerate the delights of the situation without ever mentioning the fact that their joys are often somewhat doubtful, and very dearly purchased. They are obliged to live in the company of coarse, stupid women, and put up with their whims and silliness, their bad temper, and their extravagances. These

latter in return give them material pleasures, but no happiness. The majority of students who keep such women do so out of pure vanity, merely that they can boast about them, and be seen walking with them. If it were not for the "gallery" they could not stand them for a week.[1]

There is an absolute lack of critical perception of values in such cases. On one side of the scale there is material pleasure and the satisfaction of vanity; but over against it one must put the lost mornings which should have been given to earnest, happy-hearted work, but which are replaced by miserable days of exhaustion, physical ruin and besotted habits. Then to these must be added the lost opportunities for taking delightful trips, the debts to be paid later, the regrets of after years, and the disappointments and degradation of the present.

There is only one remedy, and that is to fly the danger, and if it is too late, to break off resolutely, change one's surroundings,

[1] See in connection with this a very good chapter by Maxime du Camp in his "Testament litéraire: Le Crépuscule, Propos du Soir," 1893, Chap. II, "La Vanité!"

leave the companions whose influence seems to be bad, and, if necessary, change one's residence, or even one's neighborhood. One must lead an absolutely different life in thought, in words, and actions, from the one we are considering now; and above all, one must bring a very critical and unfavorable examination to bear upon the pleasure that may be derived from the company of courtezans. If the student would, for a fortnight, cast up a little account of these fleeting loves, and would write down every day, after thinking the matter over carefully, a list of his pleasures, with their pro rata value, and then in an opposite column a list of his ennuis and annoyances and disgusts, he would be stupefied at the results. He would be still further amazed if every evening, or better still, every two hours, he made a note of his "state of mind." He would then begin to get some idea of the extraordinary illusion which is falsifying the total of each day and each month, and that makes him believe he is amusing himself, or being amused, when each moment, taken by itself, is a moment of boredom or disgust, or, to say the least, in-

difference. The error is due to a curious phenomenon of auto-suggestion, which dispels the memory of the reality and puts in its place an invented, falsified memory. This pseudo-memory is a state of mind manufactured out of whole cloth. It is the state that he expected to be in, and that according to his innocent fancy he feels ought to have really existed, but which never for a single moment was actually present in his consciousness.

Our power of illusion along these lines is even so great that very often we pay no attention to the real state of mind in which we actually are, because this real state does not tally with what we think it ought to be. This illusion is nowhere so strong or so deplorable as when it comes to the valuation put upon the pleasures of such women's company. We repeat our statement, almost all the moments spent with these poor creatures whose silly brains are filled with coarse or stupid ideas and intolerable whims, are, in themselves, disagreeable; but the sum of these disagreeable moments are transformed by vanity into an agreeable memory. We do not hesitate to state it once again, that he never takes into

account either the time he has wasted or the money he has foolishly thrown away, or the intellectual ruin which follows these excesses. Neither does he give a thought to the true pleasures which he has sacrificed, to the museums he could have visited, or the inspiring lectures he might have attended. He forgets the interesting conversations and the long walks he might have had with his chosen friends. He does not realize that the disgust which follows one of these orgies is one of the most unpleasant and contemptible feelings he can experience in life. He never dreams that he has deprived himself of the opportunity of visiting the Alps or the Pyrenees, or of spending a little time in Brittany during his vacation. He forgets that for the price of a few nights spent in debauchery he could have taken a trip in Belgium or Holland or up the Rhine, or in Italy. He has no conception of the rich harvest of memories that can be stored up at twenty years of age from such travels, memories that he will refresh in later years to brighten days of sorrow and toil. Another thing that he will have missed are the beautiful books of art, and

works on travel, etc., the engravings and paintings that he might have had as lifelong companions, and which would have always been at his hand in the long winter evenings, but which he never bought.

Even the vanity which he has gratified by satisfying his desire to make this kind of display, is of an inferior quality. It can not be compared with the pride which a student feels in successes due to work; nor even to the thousand little excusable vanities of the student who is proud of his artistic treasures, or who likes to talk about his travels. The existence of the student who "sees life" is, in reality, horribly monotonous and unprofitable; and even more than that, it is stupid, nauseatingly stupid.

IV

The social consequences of prostitution are deplorable. This unfortunate kind of life, called, probably in mockery, a "life of pleasure," reduces a young man's morals to chaos, and often leads him to the most barbarous

vices. In fact, the dangers which threaten the student's health are so great, and the effects of the waste of time and of money, last through so many years that, taking all these reasons into account, no young man of spirit would hesitate to turn over a new leaf and make good, honest resolutions.

But there is another form of sensuality which we ought to touch upon without any false modesty, whose ravages are none the less dreadful for being secret. It is a vice which has nothing seductive in it of itself and one in which vanity throws no glamour over the unworthy pleasures which it affords.

It is purely and simply a vice, and which one hides because one is ashamed of it. It is manifestly a sign of degeneration, and should be considered pathological.

For these reasons the treatment is simple and the cure certain. No sophisms conceal the ugliness of this deplorable habit.

The unfortunate youth who is afflicted with this form of neurosis has only his own sensations to consider without their being tinged by extraneous sentiments. This renders the struggle, I will not say easy but possible. It

is possible to make a complete "transfer of accounts," and to apply the superabundant energy to another page of the budget. The whole trouble comes from the imagination, therefore it is wise, the moment the suggestion springs up in the mind, to go out and find someone else to bear one company, or else to plunge energetically into one's work. Here, more than anywhere else, the direct struggle is dangerous, and victory lies in flight. One must go on one's way with the same indifference that one assumes when dogs are barking, knowing that the more one commands them to stop, the harder they bark.

One must make every effort to render one's lapses as few and as far apart as possible.

We must add still further, that the greatest cause of this vice, is that empty-minded state that lets every suggestion have its way, and the absence of healthy, vigorous stimulation. The great remedy, therefore, we must say once more, is to be found in methodical work; that is to say, in hearty, productive work, and in a life full of active, energetic pleasures.

II

ENEMIES TO COMBAT: COMPANIONS, ACQUAINTANCES, ETC.

Having finished the main part of our work, the secondary dangers which threaten the work of the student, remain to be rapidly reviewed. He should use the greatest care in choosing his companions. He will meet among those who pass as his friends, the surest enemies of his future. First, there is a certain number of rich young men, who, lacking the stimulus that the need of support would give them, and spoiled by the easy habits of their home, pass their youth foolishly in preparing a blank existence for their old age, and who, feeling that they themselves are, after all, rather contemptible, ridicule the hard workers in order to hide their own inner feeling of shame.

But there is another species of mind that is still more formidable and that begins to work its ravages even at college. This is the class to whom those belong whose weak-

ness has rendered them pessimistic, and who are discouraged even before the fight. Like all helpless people, they are extremely envious and hypocritical, and basely jealous. This odious state of mind makes them proselytes of a new order, most patient, persevering proselytes, whose object seems to be to discourage stronger wills. Their presence is always depressing. They are continually on the watch for failures in others, and they finally acquire a most unfortunate influence. Conscious of their own weakness and the fatal outlook before them, they seem to take pleasure in hindering others from making an effort.

There are others again who are simply lazy, who beg and exhort a companion to do nothing; they try to lead him off to the saloons, and plan to bring about opportunities for debauchery. French students are much better in certain ways than German students, who are banded into little societies, which take away all initiative and all independence and lead them to drink to excess.[1]

[1] Compare Th. de Wyzewa: "La vie et les moeurs en Allemagne," "Revue des Deux Mondes." March 15, Year LXI.

They are more sober and get along to better advantage by themselves. But they generally exaggerate the extent of their liberty. Altho they are left alone in apparent liberty in a great town, nevertheless, they are in bondage wherever they go. Yet the cause of this lies in themselves. The overpowering vanity of twenty years of age makes them submit docilely to public opinion; that is to say, to the opinion of their comrades, and principally of the most good-for-nothing fellows, who, as a rule, have that kind of authority which comes from audacity combined with a bold bearing and a cock-sure manner and peremptory tone and violent epithets of abuse for all right and proper conduct. They nearly always have that combination of qualities which imposes on weak wills, and they adopt this tone with every one with whom they have anything to do. Their authority grows by the strength given it by the already confirmed proselytes, who have blindly accepted as the life of pleasure, as the ideal life of a student, the most fatiguing, empty, and foolish sort of existence that it is possible to imagine. They ruin their health and their

intelligence in order to win the good opinions of those whom they admire and whom they servilely imitate. "If every man stuck to his own vices," Lord Chesterfield[1] remarks, 'few people would be as vicious as they are!" To shine with the splendor of these youths who lead a life of pleasure, is, according to the same author, to shine with the unhealthy flicker of rotten wood in the dark. The truly independent young man is he who repulses such suggestions, and who knows how to call this kind of pleasure by its true name, an unmitigated bore and waste of time. He knows how to refuse, politely but absolutely, all such invitations. He does not allow himself to be influenced by ridicule; he avoids being drawn into discussions, concerning his work and the questions of pleasure, of which he can plainly see the outcome. He knows that the great majority of his companions have never reflected upon the direction of their own lives; he knows that they are carried along as if by a whirlwind, the unconscious sport of external forces, blown hither

[1] "Letters of Lord Chesterfield to his son Philip Stanhope." Letters of September and October, 1748.

and thither without will; and he attributes no more importance to their opinion than an alienist does to that of the unbalanced people whom he examines. Because these young people have absurd prejudices, it is absurd that I, who am fully aware of their stupidity, should look at things from their point of view! Should I sacrifice my liberty and health and all my delight in work to avoid their sarcasms and to win their tolerance or even their admiration? I know that their pleasures only bring fatigue and leave them in a state of stupefaction; shall I therefore go and join in their carouses? Knowing, as I do, that popular language expresses only the mediocre and coarse ideas of the masses, should I submit to the authority of epithets and the association of words and formulas and pretended axioms, which serve to legitimize the triumph of the beast in man over his rational will? Never could I fall so low; solitude is a thousand times preferable. It is far better for a young man to leave the student's quarters behind him and to find a home by himself in a neighborhood that is far enough away to discourage idle companions,

a pleasant, attractive room, that is scrupulously clean and bright with sunlight and, if possible, gay with plants or a glimpse of green from the windows. He should then go into the society of people who are superior to himself, make visits to his professors, let them know how his work is getting on, and tell them about his aspirations and his discouragements, and seek among them to find one who would be, as it were, his spiritual director. Instead of the saloons and the cafés, he should make regular visits to the museums, and take walks in the country, and enjoy conversation in his own home with one or two friends of steady and refined character.

As to the attitude of the student toward clubs and associations, he ought to be entirely in sympathy with them. The majority of young men would profit by deserting the restaurants for fraternity houses. They will find there, it is true, a society of somewhat mediocre caliber, but at the same time, they will have a chance to meet some of the superior men of the college, and they will learn to know each other and sympathize with each other. The only danger—which is great—

but not so great as that of the café or restaurant, is of forming those habits which send their roots deeply into the obscure regions of our activity, and which, little by little, master our will and prevent its development, just as Gulliver was fastened to the earth by the thousands of fragile bonds made of his hairs which the Lilliputians had fastened to as many tiny pegs driven into the earth. The student, little by little, feels a craving for the excitement of the society of his fellows, he wants to form one of the little company, which habitually wastes its time in rooms filled with tobacco smoke and in doing nothing during the hours which ought to be devoted to taking a walk in the open air. Another very great danger, is the great number of papers and reviews which waste one's mental energy by scattering it, and consequently annihilating its influence. Such reading is apt to throw one's thoughts into a state of feverish excitement similar to that which stimulants give the body. This excitement is doubly injurious, injurious in itself, because of the restlessness it produces, and injurious by its ultimate profitlessness. Who

is not in a bad humor and thoroughly exhausted after getting up from reading eight or ten periodicals? And who, for a moment, would fail to appreciate the difference between the nervous, unhealthy fatigue which follows such reading and the feeling of healthy enjoyment which follows earnest, methodical, and productive work?

But on condition that he remains master of himself and does not *fall into bad habits,* and does not dissipate his mental forces, the student can find in his fraternity a beneficial diversion, a relaxation, the chance of a laugh with good-humored companions, and even of a stimulating discussion. There is also more chance here of forming the nucleus of a circle of chosen friends. In the same way that printing has emancipated the intelligence by placing at the disposal of unbiased minds the works of the great geniuses of every age, so a student fraternity alienates each one of its members from the baneful "liaisons" of the restaurant and chance-meetings with temptation, and brings him in contact with personalities and temperaments of widely different character, among whom he can find friends

after his own heart. Without these fraternities, such friendships would be a matter of chance. The wonderful variety of temperament and character presented by an association of young men, gives an opportunity for the formation of groups congenial, either through sympathy of temperament or the reverse, groups which, as will be shown, are essential to the process of self-education.

As to worldly relations, the student can extract from them nothing but a certain ease of manner and veneer of culture—their only attributes. What one calls "the world," in the provinces at least, is by no means a society calculated to temper either the intelligence or the character. Morality there has a pitifully low standard and is unspeakably hypocritical. Money forgives everything. The creed which these people profess is a servile adoration of fortune. A young man can learn hardly anything there that is not the offspring of a perverted conscience. He most certainly does not learn the lesson of sobriety. Neither does he acquire a respect for superiority of intellect or of character. The people of the world, by reason of their lack

of true culture, are rigorously subservient to popular prejudice. Folly is contagious; if he allows himself to become an habitué of such society, the young man will soon see some of his most cherished illusions smashed to atoms, and worse still, he will see ridiculed his righteous protests against social conditions with their injustice and insincerity.

The world will soon make him, by its own example, wholly indifferent to everything that is out of the running. It will deprive him of all his nobler ideals, and dry up the springs of his enthusiasm. What an enviable fate is his when he has developed into one of those men "always looking, always listening, never thinking," whom Marivaux[1] so aptly compares to people who spend their lives at the window. What a culmination when he has got to the point of hearing without being interested in anything, obliged, in order to hide from himself the horrible emptiness of his existence, to submit to those tyrannical obligations which make the life of the man of the world the most fatiguing and the most foolish and the most hopelessly monotonous

1 "Vie de Marianne," Part V.

that can possibly be imagined. Any discussion of a subject which will lead to a difference of opinion, is there considered bad form, and conversation is reduced to the banal. A young man of intelligence and character is bewildered by it. Not only does he waste his time, but he also loses something of his moral vigor. Far better is the companionship of his friends with their violent arguments and their discussions, adorned like those of Homer's heroes, with impassioned epithets.

III

ENEMIES TO COMBAT: SOPHISMS OF THE INDOLENT

I

Indolence, like every other vice, seeks an intellectual justification. The majority of men do not even attempt to resist the demands of their lower nature, and it can easily be realized that solemnly pronounced axioms and proverbs that sound infallible, will always be ready for use as a justification, and even as a glorification of the idler.

Belief in the immutability of character received at birth has already been touched upon and it is hoped, definitely dismissed. This naïve theory is an example of the power possest by words to render creditable the ideas which they enunciate. The subject will not be reopened, except to emphasize how efficient a support this credulity is able to give to our cowardice and indolence. Perhaps the feeling of revolt against the length of time required for self-conquest, supplies this creduli-

ty with its greatest stimulus, causing it, as a fair return, to react upon our indolence with borrowed energy. This theory is, moreover, only one of the weapons which laziness finds in the perfect arsenal of maxims which its supporters have supplied.

The devil, according to an old fable, is obliged to vary his temptations in order to allure sinners; but for the indolent, this is not necessary. They will swallow the most ordinary bait, and the grim fisherman is sure of his catch each time. In fact, no vice is more ready to justify itself by such specious and ingenious means.

There is one very general complaint among students. Those who are obliged, in order to cover their expenses, to tutor or teach in smaller colleges or to act as preceptors, as well as those who only have to give a few lessons, all declare with the greatest regret, that their daily work takes all their time. But, as has been pointed out, there is always plenty of time for those who know how to make it. It is impossible that in the twenty-four hours of the day one can not find the four hours that are necessary and that would

suffice for thorough intellectual culture. A very few hours a day, in fact, are enough, if one takes care to put by for study those moments when the mind is in full possession of its vigor and resourcefulness. If to these hours of close application, there are added for taking notes and copying and tabulating material those moments which are usually frittered away, there is no career which will not allow room for a considerable intellectual development. Furthermore, it is not long before even those professions which appear to have the least routine, such as law and medicine and the teaching profession, cease almost completely, as has already been said, to contribute anything to the intelligence. At the end of a few years the professor knows his course. The lawyer and the physician have, except in rare instances, exhausted all new cases. That alone explains why, in the highest positions, one finds so many men who are remarkable in their specialty, but who have, without any doubt, let their superior faculties rust for lack of use, and who, outside of their regular occupations, are stupid to a surprizing degree. For ex-

ample, the fatigue of a professor's work is not wholly intellectual fatigue; it tends to overstrain the muscles which are used in speaking, and as these muscles belong to a very limited group, they get tired quickly. This local fatigue, however, has but a very slight effect on the condition of one's general strength, and it by no means excludes the possibility of intellectual work.

Furthermore, many men admit, when they are pushed to it, that they could find three or four hours each day for study; but, they say, to prepare for such or such an examination, one must work at least six hours a day; therefore they have a good reason for doing nothing. Apply yourself to work, even if only for three hours each day, and it will soon be discovered that the work is not profitless, and that the sum total of working hours is the same, whether three hours a day for six months, or six hours a day for three months has been the time employed. The work is the same, but results are different, for, as Leibnitz has said, "the more we try to polish our minds by excessive study, the more we are apt to dull them."

Some indolent people recognize the fact that they can make no excuse for lack of time, but there is no use in starting to work, they say, when one is not in the proper condition for it. A dull, sleepy mind can accomplish nothing of value. They assert that in the morning work has to be given up, because so much time is required to get the mind into "proper trim." No greater mistake can be imagined. If one has slept too soundly, it is *always* possible, after persevering for a quarter of an hour, to make some effort to put one's self into the right mood. I have *never* seen young people, unless they had had a very poor night, who were not rewarded by the ability to do excellent work if they perseveringly struggled against their morning sleepiness. The intelligence soon becomes acute, and can work with ease. The truth of the matter is, that this pretended torpor of the intelligence is nothing else but torpor of the will.

II

Space does not allow of a detailed review of all the sophisms of the indolent. However, in a book which is dedicated to young people who are planning to do some of the world's work, it is necessary to investigate one of the most serious axioms in vogue; an axiom which is lightly uttered by men who do not in the least suspect the havoc that their words cause. Many workers, who are obliged to live in small towns, are discouraged before they even begin their work, because every one says that it is impossible to do any real intellectual work, except in the large universities. In France, one often hears it said that no work is possible, except in Paris. There is nothing more fatal nor discouraging than this statement solemnly reiterated by men of talent.

It contains only the smallest particle of truth. And no matter who the authorities are, who are quoted in its support, it is almost wholly false.

In the first place, the facts are against it. The ideas of the majority of great thinkers have been developed in solitude. Descartes, Spinoza, Kant, Rousseau, and in later days, Darwin, Stuart Mill, Renouvier, Spencer and Tolstoï, who have revolutionized modern thought on so many points, owe the best part of their success to solitude. In fact, there is nothing in the nature of intellectual work that necessitates living in Paris. That Paris alone in France recognizes talent and that it alone can surround the successful man with the glamour of consistent publicity, can be granted as a fact. On account of our excessive centralization, our attention is turned toward Paris, and it is only because it is the focus toward which every eye is turned, that reputations become so brilliant; but this privilege is not confined to men of talent, and a notorious criminal receives the same attention as a writer whose works will endure for ages.[1]

Still, moreover, tho Paris may be the only medium by which well-known names can be

[1] Here what is said of Paris applies to other large cities, as New York, London, Chicago, Philadelphia, Boston, etc.

brought before the public, it is by no means indispensable during those long periods of early work and attention, which alone ought to precede the first success.

Neither has it been proved that Paris is indispensable to the physician and to the psycho-physician, who need laboratories. This statement will absolutely cease to be true when the universities possessing the right of freehold will be able to develop their resources to better advantage. These universities will furnish a new proof of the law laid down by Haeckel, the great German naturalist, that "the scientific output of the universities is in inverse ratio to their size." This is because, in the sciences, as in other directions, a little enthusiasm and initiative, coupled with a passion for research, will take the place of material support, and accomplish marvels, even when the resources at their command are inadequate. On the other hand, even in laboratories thoroughly equipped, an inert and unambitious mind will accomplish nothing. The important thing, therefore, is to possess unbounded enthusiasm. A laboratory is only useful as a *verifier* of precon-

ceived ideas. The idea lies in the discovery itself, not in the apparatus that facilitated it.

Outside of the sciences, there is the study of history, which requires documents to be consulted, wherever they are to be found; but philosophy, literature, the philosophy of history, and, among the sciences, mathematics, botany, zoology, vegetable chemistry, and geology, is life in a big city essential to these? If talent consists less in the absorption of numerous materials than in the assimilation of chosen materials, and if the quality of mind is distinguished chiefly by its power to organize facts that have been observed or gathered together, and to put life into them, who can not see that our researches in libraries ought to be followed by long periods of meditation and calm?

These great libraries even are not without their serious drawbacks. When it is so easy to see what our predecessors have thought on questions which interest us, we are finally apt to lose the habit of thinking for ourselves, and as no power weakens more quickly through lack of exercise, than the ability to make personal efforts, one is very apt soon

to reach the point of always and everywhere substituting attempts of memory for active personal research.

A man's capacity for original thought is nearly always inversely proportionate to the amount of stimulus furnished by his environment. It is for this reason that students endowed with a very good memory are nearly always inferior to those of their friends who are less fortunate in this respect. The latter, mistrusting their memory, have as little recourse to it as possible. They make a very careful choice of those details which they intend to introduce by repetition into their memory; they only choose what is essential to their subject, leaving everything to oblivion that is purely incidental. And the memory, the essential thing itself, is thereby more strongly organized. An organized memory is like a picked army carefully "ensconced." Thus, a man who can not have access to innumerable libraries only surrounds himself with books of the highest order, which he reads with care and which he meditates over and criticizes, supplying what is lacking by personal observation and by

thoughtful discrimination, which is the best kind of discipline for the mind.

Calm meditation is indispensable for this work of organization, but it is difficult to indulge in it in Paris. Not only is it impossible to find that absolute silence which the country brings, where one can almost hear one's self think, but the hygienic surroundings there are deplorable. The sea of chimneys and rain-pipes at one's window, the over-stimulating artificial environment, the almost necessary condition of having to remain seated during one's pleasures as well as one's studies, all contribute to ruin the health.

Still further, one is sure finally to acquire in Paris something of that restless excitement which is so characteristic of the inhabitants of great cities. The impressions that enter the mind there are too numerous, they fairly bubble around one, until, after a while, by reason of this perpetual commotion, one loses much of one's personality. The attention is constantly fastened on little things, and because it is very difficult to hold one's self back in this precipitous course, one is

naturally obliged to bow to the dictates of fashion. Even work itself has something feverish and unhealthy about it in Paris. To be convinced how much the mental condition of the worker is affected by these various causes of irritability in one's surroundings, one has only to read the very sincere and instructive treatise of M. Huret on the evolution of literature.[1] This draws attention to the effects of crowding and congestion in an enervating environment, and makes one's pity flow for the sufferings of the many young writers, who are not only devoured by envy and restlessness, but who are badly lodged in uncomfortable dwellings. As for myself, I declare I can see how living in cramped quarters on the fourth story in a street filled with noise, and far from the fields and woods, might produce irritation, but I can not see how such a state of things can give a young man any added intellectual value.

And when we come to the point of speaking of the society which is found in large cities,

[1] Jules Huret: "Enquête sur l'évolution littéraire," Paris, 1891.

I can in the heart of a little village have intercourse with the greatest spirits of the age. I only have to buy their works. These great men, having confided the best of their genius to their works, and, as a rule, not liking to speak of the works which they have produced with so much toil, look upon society as a relaxation. The intellectual profit which young people can draw from their society is insignificant compared to the profit they can derive from the study of their works. The immense advantage that such relations can have upon a young man of talent and energy is based on that feeling of emulation which is produced by a contact with success; but such opportunities of intellectual intercourse naturally fall to the lot of but very few.

The one great advantage of living in Paris —and it can not be overestimated—is the opportunity for esthetic culture which can be found there. Music, painting, sculpture, eloquence; there is in this marvelous city an artistic initiative which is lacking in the majority of provincial towns. But once this initiation has been received, the provinces have many resources for any intellectual worker

who wishes to avail himself of them. Besides, to be provincial does not necessarily mean to live in some little village or remote parish. One can be provincial in Paris, for the only meaning implied in the term is to signify the absence of all outside interests. The provincial is the man whose mind is filled with unimportant gossip; who sees nothing in life beyond eating, drinking and sleeping and making money; he is a stupid fellow, who has no other pastime but smoking, playing cards and making coarse jokes with people of the same intellectual level as his own. But if a young man, tho he lives in the provinces, even in a little village, has a love of nature, and if he lives in constant communication with the greatest thinkers, he certainly does not deserve the epithet, provincial, in the contumacious sense generally associated with it.

And what compensations there are to be found on being at some distance from the great centers! Some authors have compared little villages to convents. There may be found the silence and the calm of cloisters; there one can follow a train of thought with-

out being incessantly distracted by one's environment. No more interruptions, no more scattered efforts! One can live in one's self and enjoy one's own thoughts. In such a calm and tranquil environment, our deepest impressions gain strength. Ideas are awakened, little by little, and group themselves according to their affinities, and memories come back again. Such slow, calm, and powerful growth of the intelligence is vastly superior to the hurried, uneven, feverish development which one is apt to undergo in large cities.

The nights in the country are nights of rest, which assure a morrow full of energy, and the hours of recreation which are passed in the woods or open air are hours of invigoration. No more irritability, no more fever. It becomes easy to pursue an idea steadily and tranquilly along every one of its possible ramifications. The work of committing things to memory can be accomplished, and infinitely better accomplished, without being bent over a work-table. But in the forest or fields, the blood, quickened by walking, and, as it were, suffused in oxygen, enables

the mind to retain forever the impressions which are entrusted to it in these happy moments. The work of composition and meditation becomes easy; ideas run through the mind and are readily classified; one comes in and sits down to work with a distinct plan of work, an ample storehouse of impressions and ideas, and furthermore, with all the hygienic advantages of exercise in the open air.

But it is useless to emphasize this further, because talent is not produced by external conditions. Development does not take place from without to within, but rather from within to without. The circumstances of the outer world are never more than accessories; they help or they hinder, perhaps less, than one is in the habit of believing. One must therefore not classify students into students who live in Paris, and students who do not live there. There are only two great classes to be established among them: those who really work, the energetic, and those who do not know how to work, or the weak willed; the first, in whatsoever environment they live, accomplish marvels with very little means, the first expression of their energy being, as

a rule, to create the means; the second, tho surrounded by libraries and laboratories, do nothing and never will do anything.

III

The end of the fourth book has now almost been reached. It was necessary, first, to take up the question of vague sentimentality, a most dangerous state to the will. Its causes and its remedies were examined, for the foolish illusions which cause such prodigious errors in the valuation which the student puts upon his pleasures had to be destroyed. We were forced to stop to take up the unpleasant subject of sensuality under the various forms in which it appears, and to examine the best means of struggling against it. And, finally, we have been obliged, while clearing the way, to destroy the prejudices and sophisms which laziness has suggested, in the form of axioms, to those who will not work under any consideration. It now remains for us to turn about and do the opposite thing; that is to say, to begin constructive

operations. After the analytical meditations, of which we have just given an example, and which each student can work out more completely from his own experiences and his personal reflections, must come the creative meditations, by which the will can be stimulated and the energy strengthened.

IV

JOYS OF WORK

I

THERE is no sadder reflection than that produced by the shortness of this life. We feel our hours and days and years slipping uncontrollably away. We are conscious that this flight of time is bearing us rapidly toward death. Those who have frittered their time in frivolous occupations, who have left no works behind them to mark the way along which they have passed, experience a singular sensation when they look behind them. The years seem to them barren and empty, for such they are if they bear no memory of efforts which have ripened into achievement. The vanished life seems reduced to nothingness, and the feeling irresistibly arises that the past is nothing but a vain dream.

On the other hand, when our progress begins to lose the interest of novelty, when the difficulties of existence have taught us the limit of our powers, and when not only the

present but the future appears monotonous, then life seems to quicken its path, and, to the impression that the past was nothing but a dream, there is added another still more distressing, that the present itself is only an illusion. To those who do not know how to overcome the degenerating tendencies of the organic life, such as laziness or subjection to social or business life, by hours of happy meditation, this illusion gives them a hopelessly helpless feeling. They are carried along like prisoners at a rapid gait and against their will.

The wise man is borne along just as rapidly as they, but he has realized the futility of resistance; he has freed himself by accepting what he could not avoid, and he tries at least to give his journey the appearance of being a long one. He succeeds in doing this by not letting the past wholly disappear. He knows that for those to whom the journey leaves no memories behind it, this feeling that life is only a long drawn out illusion without any reality, becomes intolerable. He knows that this feeling comes inevitably to idle people, to "men of the world," to men of medi-

ocre caliber, whose lives are warped by mean prejudices and sterile efforts, to all those who, in a word, have done no work that has amounted to anything.

One can only avoid this feeling of the lack of reality by subordinating one's whole existence to some great ideal which can be slowly realized by continued efforts. Then one will experience the opposite sentiment, that of the vivid reality of life. Just as the farmer's work leaves traces of every effort which he makes, so is it with the writer who is convinced of the value that his work will have in society when he has attained his highest development. For him, each day shows some tangible results of his labor. His life finally becomes identified in part with his work and lends him something of its concrete reality. There are other ways in which the life of the worker is much more profoundly real than that of the lazy man. Confirmed idleness takes away from us the feeling of our existence and substitutes for it a vain despicable dream. Only regular, happy, productive work can give life its full savor. That upwelling sense of energy which we call the

"joy of living," can only arise and be made a part of daily life by work. Work increases tenfold the enjoyment of life, but the lazy ignore it.

On the other hand, if the life of the intellectual worker were not naturally filled with happy hours, if it were not a source from which the joys of an active life rush forth abundantly, it would still present a sharp contrast to a life of indolence. For, by the fact that the worker alone escapes from the worries, paltry cares, and miserable boredoms that are so intolerable to the idle, his existence is more enviable than all others. Darwin wrote in his journal: "During my stay at Maer, my health has been poor, and I have been scandalously lazy; the impression that this has made upon me is that nothing is so unbearable as laziness."[1] "When a soldier, or a laborer complains of the work which they have to do, let them be put to doing nothing," says Pascal. In fact, the lazy man is a "*heautontimorousmenos,*" or a self-executioner, and the idleness of his mind and body soon begets a dull, miserable sense of

[1] "Journal of Darwin," August, 1839.

ennui. Many rich people, whose fortune has relieved them of the salutary necessity of work, and who do not possess the courage to undertake some permanent work for themselves, soon learn the meaning of this dull, miserable *ennui.* They are plunged in melancholy, and are cynical about everything, or else they try to find diversion in sensual pleasures, which soon, by their satiety, redouble their miseries.

But absolute idleness is rare, and, as the proverb says, "Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do." When the mind has no more worthy occupation, it is soon filled with trifling preoccupations. He who does nothing at all has plenty of time to chew the cud of petty annoyances. Such rumination, however, far from nourishing the mind, ruins it. The force of our feelings having no legitimate channel through which to flow and cultivate the nobler side of our nature, sinks down into the depths of our animality and stagnates there. The imperceptible wounds to our self-esteem grow sore, the inevitable annoyances of life poison our days and disturb our sleep. To live like a lord is

not so enviable as it seems, when we look closely at the life. Pleasures themselves become a burden, they lose all spice and flavor, because, for man, true pleasure is inseparable from activity. Laziness reacts even on the body, and tends to exhaust the health by the languor and weakness which attend the functions of nutrition and intercourse. As for the intelligence, it is characterized in this condition by vague dreaming and morbid and profitless preoccupation. The mind "gnaws itself," to use a popular French expression. As for the will, it is scarcely necessary to recall with what distressing rapidity it is atrophied in the lazy man; every effort becomes difficult for him, so that he manages to suffer when an active man would not even suspect the possibility of discomfort. How different it is with the worker! Work being the expression of continuous and lasting effort, forms, in itself, an excellent education for the will. This is more true of intellectual work than of all other kinds, for, with the majority of manual work, the thoughts are free to wander like vagabonds wherever they will. On the other hand, mental work

presupposes both the obedience of the body, which is, as it were, held taut by the attention, and the vigorous discipline of the thoughts and feelings. If this effort, by which thought is controlled, is not followed by fatigue or by self-abandon, if one takes care not to abuse one's forces, if one has known how to husband them in such a way as to preserve, through the long hours which can not be given to work, a certain amount of vigor, even tho it be somewhat diminished, one will finally acquire a state of mental alertness, and the habit of keeping a watch over one's self-control. As the secret of happiness lies in knowing how to direct one's own thoughts and feelings, one will find by this indirect method of working the philosopher's touchstone of happiness.

It is, however, to be lamented that the ordinary run of people, who are the dictators of language, have associated with the word work so many ideas of toil and weariness and affliction, when psychology furnishes us with superabundant evidence that work causes pleasure, provided the outlay does not exceed what the normal regular functions of

nutrition can supply.[1] Montaigne quaintly remarked concerning virtue, that "her most distinctive charm lieth in her perpetual joyousness . . . her rôle is . . . to be always serene . . . virtue is not enthroned on the sharp peak of a rugged inaccessible mountain: those who have approached her say, on the contrary, that she dwelleth in a beautiful, flowery, fertile plain. Thus may she be reached by those who know the way, by shady paths bordered with green grass and sweet flowers . . . they who have never visited this goddess in her haunts, who have never seen her, beautiful, triumphant, radiant, lovable, and full of courage, the profest and irreconcilable enemy of bitterness and displeasure, of fear and constraint . . . have failed because they have made this a false image of her, and represented her as sad and quarrelsome and spiteful, threatening and petty, set on a rock in a lonely place, overgrown with briers as

[1] For the development of this thought and the strong proofs in its support, see the article by the present writer, "Plaises et Douleur," in the "Revue philosophique," May 18, 1890.

a fantom to frighten men."[1] What Montaigne said of virtue, we might also say of intellectual work, for our young people are never taught its true nature, which, also like virtue, is "beautiful and triumphant, the profest and irreconcilable enemy of grief and pain, flagrant-eyed and delicate of taste."

For the happiness that work brings is more than a negative happiness. It not only prevents life from losing its savor and becoming transformed into an unreal dream; it not only prevents the mind from being invaded by annoyances and petty worries, but it is in itself and by its results a keen source of happiness.

In itself, it raises us far above the vulgar mass. It introduces us on the footing of perfect equality and of charming intimacy into the society of the greatest and noblest spirits of all time. And by this means, it constantly renews our sources of interest. While the idle man has need of a society which is often beneath him in order to pass the time away, the worker is sufficient unto himself. The impossibility of self-sufficiency

[1] Montaigne, "Essays," I. XXV.

forces the lazy man to depend upon others, and obliges him to undergo a thousand petty degradations which the worker never experiences. So that when one says "work is liberty," one is not merely using a metaphor. Epictetus divides things into two classes, things which concern us, and things which do not. He remarks that "in pursuing the things that do not concern us, most of our disappointments and our sufferings arise." Thus, as the happiness of the idle depends wholly upon others, the man who is accustomed to work finds the greatest happiness in himself.

Furthermore, the succession of the days, which, for the idle only marks the progress of old age and an empty life, slowly but surely contribute to the storehouse of knowledge laid up by the hard-working student, and just as each evening the growth of certain plants can be computed, in the same way, after each week of effort, the young man can notice a certain growth of vigor in his faculties. These slow progressions, indefinitely repeated, will lead him to a very high degree of intellectual power. After moral

grandeur, nothing shines so brightly as a cultivated mind. The idle man grows more and more stupid as he gets older; the worker, on the other hand, sees his authority increasing year by year over those who surround him.

Then what happens? While old age gradually extinguishes the pleasures of the senses and brings the rudest disappointment to purely selfish satisfactions, it multiplies the joys of life for those who have broadened their human culture. Not one of the sources of true happiness can fail with the progress of the years. Neither the interest that one takes in science or in literature or in nature or humanity will diminish. Quite the contrary. Nothing is more true than the words of Quinet: "When old age had come, I found it much less bitter than you made it out to be. The years which you said would be full of misery and distress have been even sweeter to me than those of youth. . . . I expected it to be like an icy peak, narrow and deserted, and wrapt in fog; but I saw, on the contrary, opened up before me, a vast horizon which my eyes had hitherto never seen. I

realized myself more completely, and also, every act that I did. . . ." Then he added: "You say that the feelings become dulled with living. But I feel very sure that if I should live a century, I would never grow accustomed to what I find revolting to-day."[1]

The life of the intellectual worker is thus the most truly happy life. It deprives one of no real pleasure, it alone gives us fully the feeling of the reality of our existence; it dispels that impression which is so inevitable and unpleasant for the idle man, that life is a dream without reality. It delivers us from the miserable bondage of thought, which makes the man who has no occupation the mere plaything of external circumstances; it does not permit the mind to worry over insignificant preoccupations or low thoughts. To these indirect benefits, however, a life of labor adds still others; it tempers the will, the source of all lasting happiness, it makes us inhabitants of that city of light in which dwell the élite of humanity; and finally, it prepares us for a happy old age, surrounded by deference and respect. In an indirect way,

[1] "L'Esprit Nouveau," Book VII. Chap. II.

it lavishes prodigally upon us, in addition to the higher joys of the mind and soul, the satisfaction afforded by a feeling of honest pride, which may be summed up in the sense of authority that one has acquired, and in the realization of superiority. Those very satisfactions for which commonplace minds are always looking, often in vain—the display of luxury or fortune or dignity or political power—the worker finds without a search. They are like an extra portion thrown into the bargain, as it were, to assure good measure, and added to those rich gifts, which are the offspring of those just laws on which society is based.

II

It is evident that the preceding meditations, both those of a "destructive" character as well as those intended to strengthen the desire for good, are the barest outlines, mere sketches, which are very incomplete, and which each one must fill in to suit his own personal experiences and reflections and

reading. The essential point in this kind of meditation is not to pass lightly over an idea or a sentiment which would serve to strengthen one's distaste for an idle life, or to give enthusiasm to one's will. It is necessary, as we have said above, that each consideration should be slowly "distilled," and penetrate the very depths of the soul in order to produce the strong emotions of repulsion or affection.

Until now we have studied chiefly our own inner resources. We must, however, cast a glance upon the outer world, on our environment in the most general sense of the word, and look very closely to see what help a young man who is anxious to complete the education of his will may find there.

BOOK V

THE RESOURCES OF OUR ENVIRONMENT

I

PUBLIC OPINION, PROFESSORS, ETC.

I

We have hitherto taken up the question of the "education of the will" as if we had none but purely personal resources; as if we were isolated in the world without being able to hope for any aid whatever from society. If we were abandoned by fate to our own energy, it would not be long before we would be throwing away our arms and sitting down discouraged at the length of time required for the conquest of ourselves; but altho the impulse that moves us to try to perfect our will must necessarily spring from our inner moral nature, this impulse needs the support of very powerful social influence to sustain its enthusiasm.

We are, in reality, never isolated and thrown upon our own resources; our family, our immediate surroundings, the people of our village or our little town, sustain our

efforts by their admiration, and by their redoubled affection and unprejudiced sympathy, and when we achieve any brilliant success the applause of the public at large upholds us.

Nothing great in the world is effected without prolonged effort, and no effort can be sustained during months and years without the energy being galvanized by public opinion. Even those who openly reject popular opinions, find in the warm sympathy of an enthusiastic minority the courage to brave the majority. But to hold out alone for long years against a unanimous opinion demands a superhuman tenacity of which I know no example.

Bain, conversing with Mill on the subject of Energy, declared that its two essential sources were, either a natural superabundant vigor, or else a stimulant which produces excitement. Mill replied: "There! stimulation is what people never sufficiently allow for."[1] In fact, public opinion is an energetic stimulant, and as nothing or nobody can contradict

[1] "John Stuart Mill, A Criticism," by A. Bain, London, 1882, page 149.

it, its power may become phenomenal. It is impossible to exaggerate its effects. In Athens, this unanimous admiration of physical force and literary genius brought forth, in spite of the smallness of the country, the noblest array of athletes, poets and philosophers that any country has ever seen. In Lacedemonia, the desire for public praise produced a race of extraordinary energy. The story is well known, and probably may be true, of the Spartan boy who was surprized while stealing a fox, and who, having hidden it under his tunic, let himself be cruelly torn and bitten rather than betray his secret. One can not say that they were an exceptional people, when we have seen the redskins, on one of the lowest steps of the human ladder, endure the most cruel torments to show their contempt for their enemies, and have also seen that many villains, for fear of appearing cowardly, can show a stoical courage even on the scaffold. In our modern societies the desire, not to gain independence and security, but to indulge in luxury and style, the desire to eclipse others and to parade one's foolish vanity, will make

a whole race of merchants and bankers and leaders of commerce willing to engage in the most repulsive occupations. Nearly all men judge things only by the price that public opinion gives to them. Not only does opinion swell the sails which move our bark, but it is she who holds the rudder, taking away from us even the choice of our route and reducing us to a purely passive rôle.

This power of public opinion upon us is so strong that we can not bear to see any sign of contempt, even from unknown people, or from people whom we have every reason to despise. Every professor of gymnastics knows that young men can accomplish wonders when a stranger is present. In learning to swim or to skate, it doubles one's boldness to feel that one is observed. If we wish further to test this power of others upon us, we only have to think of how much we would suffer if we were obliged to go clothed as a beggar, even in a town where we had never been before, but especially to go through our own street in such a ridiculous guise. The misery that a woman suffers in wearing a gown that is out of fashion, in-

dicates the weight with which the opinion of others bears upon us. I can distinctly remember the mortification that I felt at twenty years of age, still being very young, and at college, at being obliged to wear my student's gown with a tiny patch on the elbow, which I doubtless was the only one to notice.

One never dreams that one might deliberately turn to advantage this frightful despotism that society exercises over the least of our actions, and so a great force is lost for lack of knowing how to put it to a good use.

In school, the boy submits to the last degree to the pressure of opinion exercised by his comrades and masters and parents, because all these forces are brought to bear upon him. Nevertheless, these forces are only brought to bear upon intellectual work, and, even on this point, his companions generally show poor judgment. They have a certain feeling of contempt for the "dig," or the hard-working student of average intelligence. The easy, graceful successes which blossom, as it were, of their own accord, thanks to the fertility of the soil, are more attractive. One sees in these young people

the great error of our systems of education, which sacrifices the cultivation of the will to intellectual culture. But, on the whole, the threefold opinion of parents and professors and students makes a very strong current flowing in one direction; and in consequence, the school often gets wonderful results from young people, who, if left to themselves, would do nothing.

Furthermore, this opinion is very distinctly exprest each week in some tangible way, either by marks awarded for composition, or notes read in the class, or by the rebuke or praise of the professor before his fellow students. In fact, there is too strong an appeal made to one's selfish feelings and to the spirit of emulation and the desire for praise, and not enough to the feeling of personal responsibility and duty. The attention is not sufficiently directed to the keen pleasure which comes with the feeling of vigorous intellectual growth, or to the joy of self-improvement, or the numerous delights that the work itself brings, both in the doing of it, and in the results. They, as it were, gird the student with cork belts, instead of teaching

him to swim without help. His difficulties are all the more unfortunate, because, from the time that he arrives at his college, he finds himself absolutely alone. The professor is too far above him, and his parents too far away. The only thing that the student has to stimulate him is his vision of the future, which is apt to be very indistinct; and the example of his elders who managed to get through without very much effort, only lowers his efficiency. The approach of the examination is apt to stimulate him to temporary efforts which, however, are always unsystematic, and which are more like stuffing or cramming than healthy food.

The student may be strengthened from without by the opinion of his comrades. Unfortunately, this opinion, from what we have been able to see, is apt to glorify, or at least to affect to glorify every thing other than work. If a young man really feels that in order to do well he must have the praise of other young men, he must not hope for it from more than a few, a little group carefully chosen from among the crowd. The student who makes up his mind that he wants to do

something more with his life than merely write a little essay on the influence of the songs of Béranger or the poems of Alfred de Musset, can easily find, if he wishes to, or else create an environment that will be helpful to his plans. There are many young men who leave college with great aspirations. But, as Mill[1] remarks: "Capacity for the nobler feelings is in most cases a very tender plant, easily killed, not only by hostile influences, but by mere want of sustenance; and in the majority of young persons it speedily dies away if the occupation to which their position in life has devoted them, and the society into which it has thrown them, are not favorable to keeping that higher capacity in exercise. Men lose their high aspirations as they lose their intellectual tastes because they have not time or opportunity for indulging them, and they addict themselves to inferior pleasures, not because they deliberately prefer them, but because they are either the only ones to which they have access, or the only ones which they are any longer capable of enjoying."

[1] Stuart Mill, "Utilitarianism," Chap. II.

The best way to solve the difficulties arising from the low moral tone of the mass of students, would be for those who have the higher aims to form little groups of three or four of their comrades who would agree to unite their efforts for their common good. The professors of the faculty could exercise a far-reaching influence if they would appreciate the greatness of their opportunities and the influence of their authority with the students, but unfortunately the prevailing errors concerning the rôle of higher instruction prevents the majority of them from really doing their duty. There is a prevailing opinion that the rôle of professor in the university differs essentially from that of a professor in a lyceum or undergraduate college. The latter is an educator first and last. The former is a savant. On the latter devolves the duty of instructing the mind of the boy and of molding it if he can; but the former has the serene indifference of the investigator, who has no other care than the truth.

Such assertions are neither more nor less than monstrous. They take for granted accepted conditions which have never existed.

They first of all take for granted that the professor of a faculty is a savant and that he has no other duties except the pursuit of science. This pretension might be accepted if the professor lived only for his science and by his science and his discoveries, and if he never went out of his laboratory or his study.

But this is by no means the case, altho he is a professor in the faculty, he draws his check each month. This trifling deed which takes so short a time to perform and which only occurs twelve times a year, is, nevertheless, sufficient to transform the position of the savant into that of being first and foremost a professor, who has duties not only toward science, but toward his students as well.

Thoroughly to appreciate these duties, it is necessary to comprehend the state of the student's mind when he arrives at the university. The material for such a study can be gathered by critically reviewing our own state of mind at that time, by collecting the complaints of former graduates exprest in their letters, the replies of students who are still at the university, to friends who have begged them to write the real truth about things

which are generally dissimulated, and finally by the confidences of students that are either given directly or brought about in a friendly way, or else that slip out unawares in some confession or in some innocent remark that would be fraught with meaning to an observer who was on the watch.

This state of mind in its general outline is as follows: During the first weeks the student experiences a sense of intoxication, like that of a prisoner who has just been set at liberty. This is a negative state in certain respects; it is a feeling of utter freedom from restraint. To prove to himself that he is absolutely free to do as he likes, nearly every student exercises this liberty by making a noise and by sitting far into the night at a restaurant or some such place. How proud he is the next day to boast of having come in at 2 o'clock in the morning! . . . The majority of students of the weak-willed, mediocre order will continue this stupid, fatiguing, profitless life through their whole course. The stronger natures quickly get hold of themselves. Then the lack of money comes into the question and soon forces the

poorer students to change this kind of existence and to break with their lazy companions. It is by reason of this very salutary restraint that the taste for a higher life is often awakened in men who have fine minds but weak wills. These are the only two classes of students who deserve the interest of their professors; fortunately, they are worthy of his efforts, and generally do him credit.

Once the students have become accustomed to their liberty, and the foolish intoxication of the first days has passed away and the young people have come to themselves, they begin to feel terribly lonely. A few see clearly what the matter is. At this age the need of strong moral support is very great, and young men naturally seek as friends those whom they feel will have the same aspirations as their own. It would be easy to form such groups as those of which we have spoken if the courageous young men would rise up boldly and strike a blow at the tyranny of other people's opinion, which obliges them to appear to be what in reality they are struggling hard not to be. How many of

them, through timidity or lack of moral courage, repeat formulae which they feel to be untrue, pretending to take a cynical mediocre view of life, which they really do not have, and affecting a coarseness which is distasteful to them at first, but to which, alas! they soon become accustomed.

But these groups of congenial students are not enough, unless one at least, of the company has an exceptionally strong moral nature, which is hardly possible to expect at this age. Each individual feels the need of some support from above, of some personal approbation, coming from some one higher than himself. It is this intensely human need which the Catholic Church satisfies by its confessors. But in the university, there is nothing like it. The student is completely abandoned. But, when one remembers the profound admiration that the students feel for their masters, when one has tested the strength of their faith, for all that the masters may not have talents worthy of it, one can not help but be profoundly saddened to think that no use whatsoever is made of this feeling. The professor knows hardly any-

thing of his students, he knows nothing of their family, nothing of their antecedents, nothing of their desires, or their aspirations, or their dreams of the future. If he could but suspect how much importance would be attached to a single word of encouragement or a good council or even friendly reproach in these blest hours of one's twentieth year! If the university, with its superior moral culture and its profound science would but borrow from the Catholic Church all the perception that an intimate knowledge of the human heart has suggested to this wonderful institution, it could govern the heart of youth without dispute and without rival. When one thinks of what Fichte and the German professors, in spite of their ignorance of psychology, have been able to do for the power of Germany, simply by the perfect ability to work together and by the influence of man to man upon their students, one is heartbroken to see nothing being done here, altho movements ten times as strong would be possible with our young men.

See what has happened in France, and what has been accomplished by an energetic

man, conscious of the goal which he had set before him. He knew, first of all, how to gather the students together into groups. Then, having created several groups, all that he did was to tell them very clearly the international work that the youths of France should take upon themselves; but these concise formulae, pronounced by a man who loved young people, have been like a powerful magnet drawing into the same direction innumerable forces, which, until then, had been in a state of anarchy, and which were destroying themselves by their own contradictions. Now, if what M. Lavisse has done, each professor would do for the chosen spirits among his own pupils, the results obtained would go beyond our dearest hopes. The teaching body would be able to create in the country that aristocracy of which we have already spoken, an aristocracy of strong characters ready for noble undertakings.

II

The second postulate, which we deny and which is based upon the habitual conception that everybody has of higher education, is the identity of erudition and science. Students complain of the enormous mass of undigested materials which they have to assimilate, and they also complain of their lack of experience of good methods of work. These two complaints belong together. If the student has not good methods of work, the fact is due to the absurd way in which his studies are organized. It seems to be accepted as an axiom, that once a student leaves the university he will never do any more work. The result is, that as long as they have him there, they try to pour into him, as if he were a cask, all the stuff that they can possibly make him hold. They require his memory to perform almost superhuman feats. And how encouraging are the results of this method! The great majority of young men are disgusted with work, once for all. This fine way of doing things implies, moreover,

what is false, that everything that one learns will stay in the memory. As if it were not only that which is frequently repeated which stays, and as if this frequent repetition could be extended to cover a whole encyclopedia!

It is, however, quite useless to discuss every phase of the drawbacks attendant upon higher education such as it is made by the necessity of foolish, meaningless examinations. It will be enough to point out the keystone which holds the system in place. This keystone is the false idea which one has concerning the nature of science and the value of a scientific mind and the essential qualities of the investigator, as well as his method of transmitting science to one's disciples. Germany has done us much harm in communicating to us her false conceptions on these points. No, erudition is not science! It is so far from being that, it is quite the opposite. The word science immediately suggests to us the idea of accumulated knowledge, while it ought to suggest to us the idea of a strong, vigorous mind, full of initiative, but extremely careful in verification. The majority of savants of the first order as well as

great discoverers are much more ignorant than their pupils. They could not even be true savants unless their minds were very free, for the condition of all discovery is, above all, an indefatigable mental activity in a given direction. We have already quoted (I, ii) the celebrated reply, which Newton made to those who asked for the secret of his successful method. We have shown Darwin as denying himself all reading which did not bear upon the subject of his meditation, and during nearly thirty years bringing his curious mind to bear on all the facts which might possibly enter as vital elements into the organization of his system. The power of infinitely patient and discerning meditation and a critical spirit always on the watch, these are what make a truly learned man. And with this patience and this attention always pointing toward the same end, one must have, in order to sustain them, the passion of truth and sustained enthusiasm.

Erudition, on the contrary, tends to make the mind dull. A quantity of little facts encumber the memory. The man with a superior mind leaves these, as far as possible, to

his notes. The honor of being an animated dictionary does not tempt him. He tries to keep the main ideas of his research free; he subjects them to severe criticism, and if they will stand long tests, he adopts them and lets them slowly grow; he *loves* them, and once made living realities, they cease to be dead, passive ideas in thought and become active, vigorous powers. Thenceforward, the idea first suggested by the study of facts will, in its turn, organize facts. Like a magnet that attracts iron filings and arranges them in regular order, the idea infuses order into disorder, makes a work of art out of a shapeless mass, and a building of the scattered materials. Facts without apparent importance will be brought into the light; superfluous facts will be cast aside with disdain. A man who has the happiness to have thus duly verified a few ideas, which are capable of becoming the active agents of powerful organizations of facts, is a great man.

Therefore, the power of the savant is not in proportion to the number of facts he has amassed. It is in proportion to his capacity for research and adventure, if I may thus

call it, which is constantly controlled by a severe criticism. The *number* of facts is nothing, their quality is everything. This is what is too often forgotten in higher education. It rarely ever develops strength of judgment, or a mind which is at the same time both bold and prudent. Young people are overloaded with ideas of very unequal value; they only cultivate their memory, with the result that they forget the essential thing, which is, and we do not hesitate to repeat it once again, the initiative spirit allied to methodical doubt. Note that examinations are really very easy affairs, when we come to analyze the actual state of things, both for the pupil and for the master. For the former, a conscientious "cramming" will make a very creditable show. As for the examiner, it is very much easier for him to ascertain whether the student knows this or that or still another fact than to form a judgment upon the quality of his mind. The examination becomes a lottery. Let any one verify these assertions by the monstrous program of the first year of medicine or that of the licentiate degree of natural sciences or that

of the licentiate of history, without speaking of the majority of examinations which apply to other subjects, and one will see in all its crudeness this fatal tendency to transform higher education into mere cultivation of the memory.[1]

In view of this fact, the professors must be made to realize that the courses are not the best things in their instruction. Necessarily fragmentary in themselves, without any connection with the other forces, they do not amount to a great deal, and the best course in the world, after one has left the lyceum (and often even before), is not worth as much as a few hours of sincere personal effort on the part of the student. It is the practical work which gives the greatest value to higher education. It is the contact with

[1] I defy a man of good sense to read without indignation the list of questions which were put to the candidates of the Polytechnique and of Saint Cyr. It would seem as tho they wanted to discourage every mind of any value from entering these schools, which can not be entered in any other way. The school of war itself, instead of encouraging efforts that require reflective work, substitute efforts of exaggerated memory. Compare "La Nouvelle Revue: La mission sociale de l'officer." July 1 and 15, 1893.

other students and with the master. First, by the very fact that he is there, the master proves the possibility of work. He is the living, concrete, tangible and respected example of what can be done by working. On the other hand, his conversations, his encouragements, his confessions, his semi-confidences over his methods, and more than all that, his example in the laboratory; the initiative of the encouraged student, the personal work that is cited, the expositions before his comrades, the clear and simple descriptions of books read, all this performed under the kindly control of the master, is what constitutes inspiring instruction. The more brilliant a professor is, and the more he enjoys hearing himself talk, and the more he argues, the less willingly would I confide young people to him; he must be able to make them "trot before him," as Montaigne said:[1] One no more learns the art of working, nor makes any true progress in scientific work, by listening to the professor than one gains skill and muscle in gymnastics by watching the strong man at a circus.

[1] "Essays," I. XXV.

As has been seen, the two essential needs of the student, the need of moral direction, and the need of methodical direction of work, have a common remedy in the intimate relation of the professor and the pupil. The professor himself will find his own reward in this, for in arousing scientific enthusiasm in his disciples, he will strengthen his own. On the other hand, he will be overwhelmingly convinced that the great movements of thought accomplished in the world have been, not by the communication of knowledge, but by the communication of an ardent love for the truth or for some great cause, and by the communication of good methods of work. That is to say, in a word, that influence only comes through the contact of man to man, and soul to soul. It was thus that Socrates taught Plato his method and passed on to him his enthusiasm for the truth. This also explains why it is that in Germany men of great scientific genius have sprung from little university centers,[1] where the professor and the student have had that soul-to-soul contact of which we have just spoken.

[1] Compare Haeckel, "The Proofs of Transformism," p. 35.

II

INFLUENCE OF THE "DEPARTED GREAT"

If the intellectual life and the energy of the will are so strengthened by this living contact of student and master, the solitary student may find help of this personal nature, tho to a lesser degree, through the influence of men who, tho dead, are at the same time, more alive and more capable of transmitting life than the living. When one has no opportunity of meeting living, speaking examples, nothing is worth more for the cultivation of one's moral enthusiasm than the contemplation of pure, simple, heroic lives. This "great cloud of witnesses" helps us to fight the good fight. In times of calm and solitude, association with the "great souls of the greater centuries" has a wonderful effect in strengthening the will. "I remember," says Michelet, "that when this trouble came, privations of the present, fear of the future, the enemy being only two steps off (1814), and my own enemies mocking me every day, one

day, a Thursday morning, I gathered myself together in a huddled heap; without fire (the snow lay deep over everything), not knowing even if there would be bread to eat in the evening, as everything seemed at an end for me—I had within me a purely stoical feeling—I struck my oak table with my hand, it was numb with the cold, but I felt the virile joy of youth and of the future. Who gave me this vigorous enthusiasm? Those with whom I lived my daily life; my favorite authors. I was each day drawn more closely to this noble society.'"[1] Stuart Mill[2] said that his father loved to put in his hand books which represented men of energy, who were full of resources in struggling with serious difficulties which they succeeded in overcoming, books of travels, "Robinson Crusoe," etc., and further on[3] he relates the remarkable effect that was produced on him by the pictures which Plato drew of Socrates, or Turgot's life of Condorcet. Such reading can produce the most profound and lasting impressions.

[1] Michelet, "Ma jeunesse," page 99.

[2] John Stuart Mill, "Memoirs," Chap. I, page 8.

[3] *Ibid,* page 108.

Think of the wonderful power that such leaders of thought possess! We see Socrates, after more than 2,000 years have rolled by, still preserving his authority and his marvelous power of kindling the purest enthusiasm in youthful souls.

It is unfortunate that we can not use, as the Catholic Church does, the lives of the lay saints for the instruction of young people. Does not the life of a philosopher like Spinoza stir up an extraordinary feeling of admiration in those who read his moving recital?

It is to be regretted that these wonderful biographies, which are scattered here and there, have never been united in a single collection; such a book would be the Plutarch to which the mental workers could refer in order to strengthen their energy. The idea of the calendar of Auguste Comte was an excellent one; he proposed that each day one should meditate upon the life of some benefactor of humanity, to whom that day's thoughts should be devoted. But has not classical education, as it is understood, exactly this end in view: to kindle a calm and lasting enthusiasm for all that is grand and noble and generous in

the minds of students? And has it not attained its end if a chosen few perceive the high ideal, and can henceforward never stoop to lower things or sink back to the common level? These chosen few, destined to form the holy battalion on which the civilized world fixes its eyes, owes its superiority to long companionship with the purest human genius of antiquity.

Unfortunately, altho our better feelings can be stimulated by this companionship, these noble dead can not furnish us the more definite council of which we stand in need, and nothing can take the place of the spiritual direction given by an experienced and careful master.

CONCLUSION.

The preceding chapters show us how easy the task of mastering self would be, if everything in our national education could be made to converge toward this great conquest! For, altho the struggle against laziness and sensuality is not easy, it is at least possible, and the knowledge of our psychological resources ought to give us confidence. The practical conclusion to be drawn from the entire work is that we can reform our character; that we ourselves can educate our own wills; that with time and a knowledge of the laws of our nature, we are sure to arrive at a high degree of self-mastery. What the Catholic religion can accomplish for the nobler natures of humanity enables us to see what could be done for the finer minds of our own young people; for we can not say that the revealed religions make use of means which are beyond our power to employ. If we examine the source of the remarkable power of the churches over the faithful, we discover that their methods

of action may be separated into two great divisions: the purely human methods, and those that are purely religious in their nature.

The human measures may be reduced to three, the power of authority, the authority of men of genius who are dead, the authority of bishops, priests, theologians, etc., and in former times, even the civil authority, which placed at the disposal of the church the power of imprisonment, torture, and burning at the stake. To this power, which, to-day, is much diminished, was added all the weight of public opinion, the hatred and contempt and persecution of the believers toward the non-believers. Finally, from infancy a religious education molds the child, and by repetitions in every form, oral instruction, reading, public ceremonies, etc., impresses a religious sentiment most profoundly on his soul.

Now could not we use these three powers to even a better advantage than the churches? Is there not perfect harmony among thinkers of all orders on this great question of the perfection of self? Is it possible to have dissention as in religious dogmas? We are in charge of the education of the child. And

if our methods could be brought together; if we but knew the end to pursue, would not our power become enormous? Could we not mold the soul of the child according to our own ideas? As for public opinion, education must change that. The admiration of the multitude is already often bestowed upon what is great and generous. Noble feelings are the cause of union between men and tend to fortify themselves more rapidly than others which are the cause of dissensions. That is why we often see a crowd composed largely of rascals applauding an honest speech. Furthermore, public opinion is easily led, and a minority of energetic, honest men is enough to turn it in the right direction. What they were able to do in Athens for beauty and for talent and in Sparta for self-renunciation, could not modern society accomplish with even less effect for a still more noble object?

But, it is said that no great work of moral improvement is possible if its foundations are not based upon religious truth. We believe this, but we also believe that the only religious truth that is necessary and sufficient, is to admit that the universe and human

life are not without a moral end, and that no effort for good is lost. We have seen above [1] that this theory is based on sound judgment, and that in the last analysis one must necessarily choose between it and the opposite theory. Whichever choice one makes, one can not prove it experimentally. Choice for choice, it is better to choose the side which has the strongest presumptions in its favor; all the more, not only because the mere hypothesis seems more likely to be true, and is the only one that is comprehensive to us and at the same time consoling and socially indispensable. This minimum of religious truth may become for thinking minds an abundant source of powerful religious feelings. This belief, while in nowise denying anything in revealed religions, can include their beliefs, as a genus includes all its species. Furthermore, this minimum of religious belief hardly being enough for any but cultivated minds, the thinker will look upon religions as allied with it and working toward the same end, and will tolerate them, in so far, at least, as to maintain a scrupulous re-

[1] See above Book III, Chap. I, Sec. IV.

spect for differing opinions. We use the word allied because religions have taken as their essential task, the struggle against the animal nature in man; that is to say, in fact, the education of the will forms the point of view of the domination of reason over the brutal forces of selfish sensibility.

We can not help, therefore, but be struck with the conviction that any man can finally attain complete mastery over himself if he will but take advantage of the aids which time and his own psychological resources offer him. As this great work is possible, it should, by reason of its importance, take the foremost place in our thoughts. Our happiness depends on the education of our wills, for happiness consists in being able to extract all the joy that we possibly can from our happiest ideas and feelings in preventing unpleasant thoughts and emotions from gaining access to consciousness, or at least preventing them from overrunning it. Happiness presupposes, therefore, that one is to a very great degree master of one's attention, which is the highest expression of the will.

But it is not only our happiness which de-

pends upon the degree of power which we acquire over self, but still further our highest intellectual culture. Genius is first of all infinite patience: the scientific and literary works which distinguish the greatest human intellect are not due to the superiority of the intelligence, as is generally believed, but to the superiority of a will that expresses admirable control. It is from this point of view that we should readjust from its very foundations our methods of undergraduate and higher education. It is very important to abolish the foolish principle of cultivating the memory exclusively, for this is weakening the vital forces of the nation. We shall have to plunge into the inextricable thickets of the curriculums of all the schools with a hatchet, so that we may cut out the tangle on every side to let in the daylight and the air, and we must be willing sometimes even to sacrifice some beautiful plants which are too crowded and which will never grow. Instead of encouraging feats of memory [1] we must substi-

[1] This substitution is sometimes very easy, thus M. Couat, rector of Bordeaux, president of the examining jury on grammar, proposes, in his report of 1892 (''Revue universi-

tute active exercise and work which will develop the power of judgment and intellectual initiative and vigorous deductions. It is by cultivating the will that men of genius are made, for all those higher qualities which are attributed to the intelligence are in reality qualities of energy and of constancy of will.

In our century we have brought all our efforts to bear upon the conquest of the outside world, with the result that we have doubled our sense of covetousness and stimulated our desires, and we are, in consequence, more restless and worried and unhappy than ever before. This is because these exterior conquests have turned our attention from our interior improvement. We have thrust the essential work, the education of our will, to one side; we have thus by an inconceivable deviation left to chance the care of tempering

taire,'' 15 December, 1892), to do away with the tabulated lists of certain passages from authors to be read. Instead of thoroughly preparing such or such required texts, one would be obliged to be thoroughly versed in Latin or Greek. The oral examinations would necessarily be less brilliant, but who can not see that this change would require the student to do real intellectual work, instead of merely memorizing texts.

this instrument, which is the most powerful one for our intellectual power and our happiness.

In addition, social questions make it absolutely necessary to modify our system of education. These questions are only hard to solve and of pernicious influence because one has neglected, as much at the primary school as at the college, to give moral education precedence over the education of the will. Most excellent rules of conduct are offered to young men who have never been taught the art of living well, to selfish, irascible, lazy, sensual men who, often, it is true, wish to correct themselves, but who, owing to this disastrous theory of free will which discourages their good intentions, have never learned that liberty and the mastery of self must be accomplished little by little. No one has taught them that if they will only use the proper measures, the conquest of self is possible, even in the most desperate cases. No one has taught them the tactics which will lead them to victory. No one has stirred within them the desire to gird themselves for this great struggle. They do not know how

noble the mastery of self is in itself, nor how rich it is in results that make for happiness and the highest mental culture. If each one would take the trouble to think about the importance of this work, and of the overflowing generosity with which the slightest efforts in its favor are rewarded, he would not only give it the first place among personal and public interests, but would set it far above all others as the most important and the most urgent of all undertakings.

THE END.

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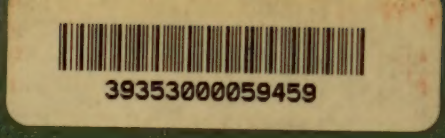
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